Izumi Tsubaki

MONTHLY GIRLS' NOZAKI-KUN

3

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[ISSUE 21]

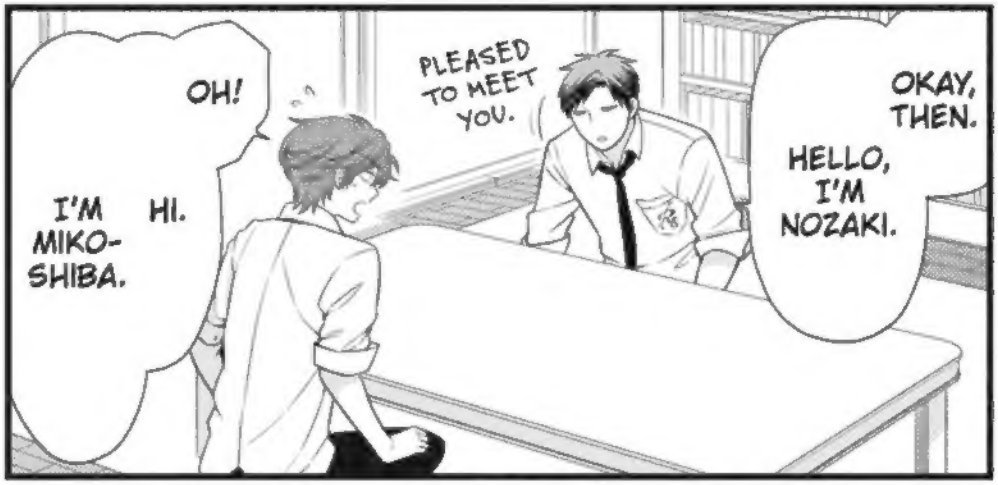
WHAT SHOULD WE DO ABOUT THE GROUP DATE THIS WEEKEND?
WE DON'T HAVE ENOUGH PEOPLE...
AND THEY SAID TO BRING GOOD-LOOKING GUYS WITH US TOO...
OH!

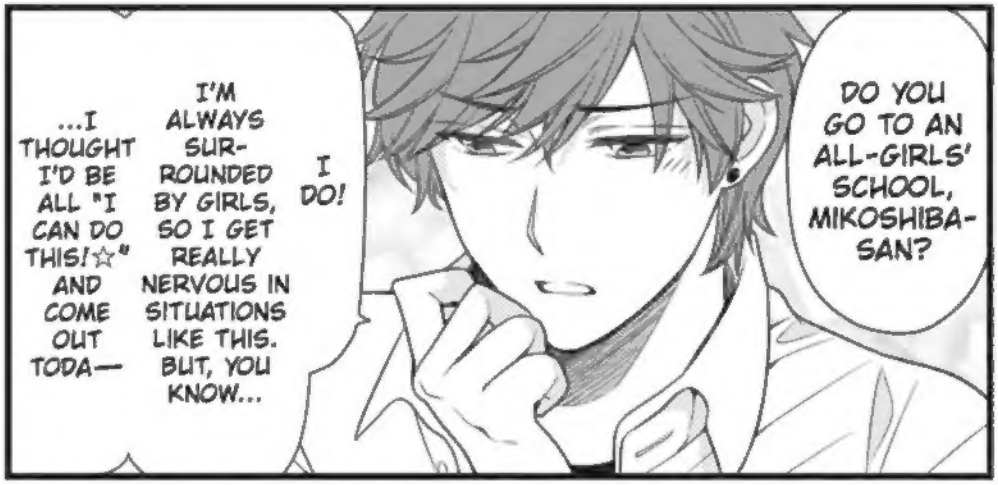
MIKO-SHIBA !!!
WANNA COME ON A GROUP DATE WITH US!?
WHY HRN? ME ...?
C'MON!
THIS KINDA THING'S YOUR SPECIALTY, ISN'T IT!? YOU LADY-KILLER!!

.....You sure you should be saying that?
If I go, every last woman there will end up falling victim to my spell...
It'll be too late... for regrets, you know?

WHY'D I...
...HAVE TO GO AND SAY ALL THAT STUFF...?
I'VE NEVER EVEN BEEN ON A GROUP DATE BEFORE...

FIRST REHEARSAL

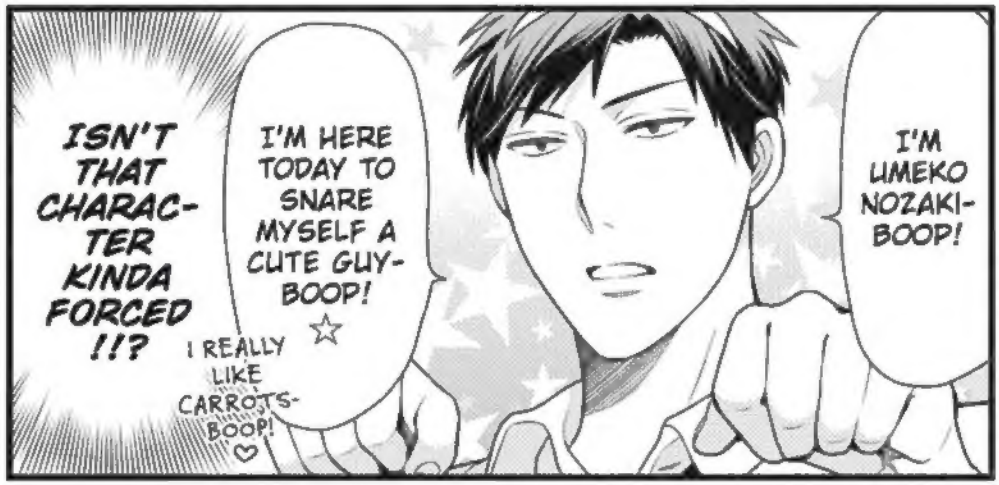



...I THOUGHT I'D BE ALL "I CAN DO THIS!☆" AND COME OUT TODA—
I'M ALWAYS SUR-ROUNDED BY GIRLS, SO I GET REALLY NERVOUS IN SITUATIONS LIKE THIS. BUT, YOU KNOW...
I DO!
DO YOU GO TO AN ALL-GIRLS' SCHOOL, MIKOSHIBA-SAN?

AIN'T GONNA HAPPEN, MAN!
WELL... I THOUGHT YOU MIGHT NEED IT IF THEY WERE MISSING SOMEONE FROM THE GIRLS' SIDE...
WHY AM I PLAYING THE GIRL?

THE WORK OF A PRO

HE'S A PRO MANGA-KA, AFTER ALL... HE EVEN TAKES A SIMPLE REHEARSAL SERIOUSLY...
A GROUP DATE, HUH...?
O— OKAY!
HANG ON, I'M GONNA GO GET IN CHARAC-TER.


ISN'T THAT CHARAC-TER KINDA FORCED!!?
I'M HERE TODAY TO SNARE MYSELF A CUTE GUY-BOOP!
I REALLY LIKE CARROTS-BOOP!
I'M UMEKO NOZAKI-BOOP!

=IN THE ORIGINAL, NOZAKI ADDS -PYON TO THE ENDS OF UMEKO'S SENTENCES. THIS IS BOTH A CUTESY VERBAL TIC THAT WAS POPULAR IN 1980s JAPAN AND AN ONOMATOPOEIC WORD ASSOCIATED WITH BUNNIES AND HOPPING.

OH, SAKURA.
HI— WHOA!
WHAT THE HELL !!?

PERFECT TIMING.
YOU CAN COME BE ONE OF MY BUDDIES.
HUH !?
WAIT!
BEFORE THAT... WHAT ARE YOU TWO EVEN DOING ...!!?
YOUR BUDDIES!!?
?
IT'S PRETTY OBVIOUS ...

OBVIOUS ...?
A CREEPY BUNNY POURING MIKORIN A DRINK...
OH... BUT I THINK I'VE SEEN THIS SCENE BEFORE ...

THAT'LL BE ¥300,000 IN TOTAL.
YOU AIN'T GOIN' ANYWHERE TILL YOU PAY UP!
THIS ISN'T SOME SHADY BAR, Y'KNOW !!!
DAN (THUD)

I'M NO MATCH FOR A REAL GIRL.
HUH!?
BUT I'M REALLY GLAD YOU'RE HERE.
YEAH.
YOU SCARED ME!
OHHH! YOU'RE PRAC-TICING FOR A GROUP DATE ...!!

...A CHANCE TO SHOW OFF MY FEMININE SIDE TO NOZAKI-KUN...!!!?
COULD THIS BE...

SHOULD I MAKE SOME SNACKS TOO?
WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE TO DRINK?
TEKI (SHIP)
PAKI (WHIP)
IS THERE ANY-THING YOU DON'T LIKE?
I MADE ONE.
GUESS WE'LL START WITH A SALAD.

...THE GIRL POWER IS STRONG IN YOU ...!!!
UMEKO ...

I'M MIKO-SHIBA.
O-OKAY, LET'S START OVER...
GATA (CLATTER)
LET'S HIT THE BATH-ROOM.
SAKU-RA.
HUH !!?

WHAT'S YOUR FIRST IMPRES-SION?
THAT MIKOSHIBA GUY WAS BEET RED, YOU KNOW.
Y-YEAH ...
I GUESS ...

I LIKE TO LISTEN TO MUSIC AND PLAY GAMES ON MY DAYS OFF.
GATA

DID YOU HEAR THAT!? HE'S THE ANTI-SOCIAL TYPE!
A TOTAL SHUT-IN!
HE'S A GAMER!
NO-ZAKI-KUN.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO COMMENT ON EACH AND EVERY THING ABOUT HIM HERE IN THE BATHROOM, YOU KNOW.

SO HOW LONG ARE WE GONNA TAKE INTRODUCING OURSELVES ANYWAY?
WE'RE NOT GETTING ANYWHERE.
YOU'RE RIGHT.
SORRY.
THEN US GIRLS WILL KEEP OUR INTROS SHORT AND SWEET.

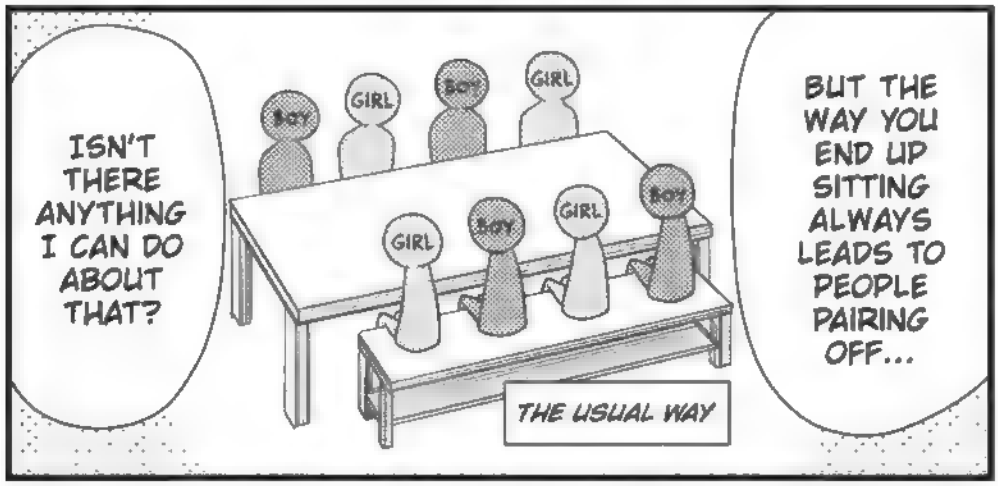
I'M UMEKO NOZAKI, AGE SEVENTEEN! I CAME HERE LOOKING FOR A GUY, ANY GUY.
I'M PLANNING ON TAKING ONE OR TWO HOME WITH ME TONIGHT.
GU (CLENCH)
WHY ARE YOU BEING SO GREEDY, UMEKO?

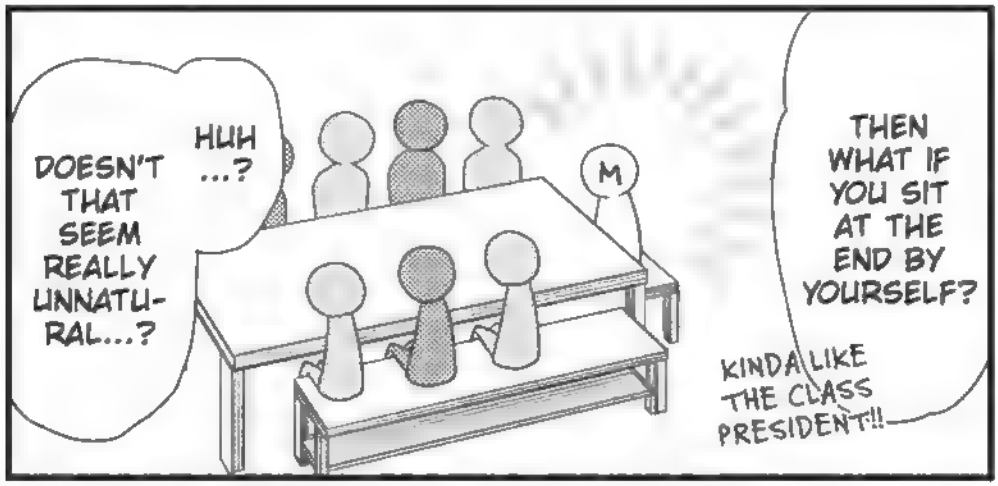
C'MON, SAKURA.
SHOW HER HOW IT'S DONE.
HUH!?
O—
OKAY!!

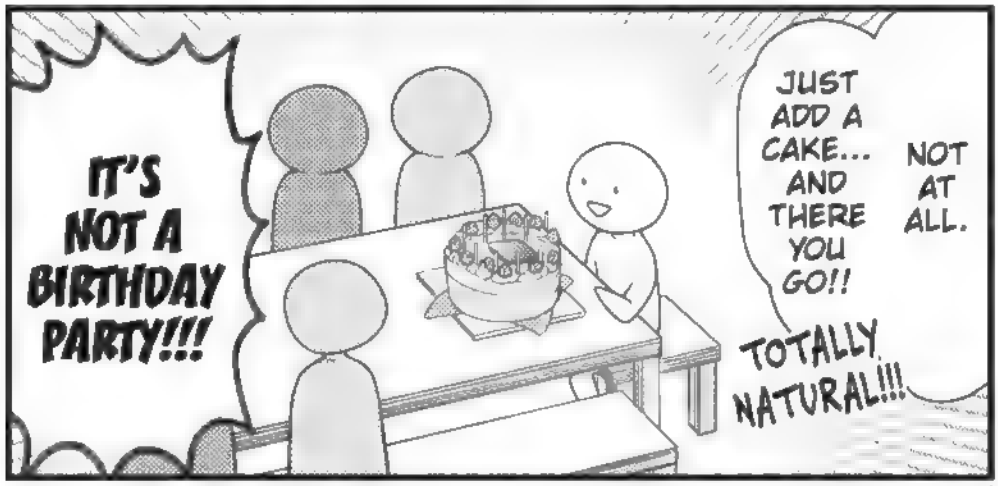
I'M CHIYO SAKURA. I'M SIXTEEN.
MY TYPE IS 6'3" WITH SHORT BLACK HAIR AND SHARP EYES.
HE'S MY AGE AND A BIT SPACEY, BUT HE'S STILL SUPER-HANDSOME!!
AND TO BE ENTIRELY HONEST, I'M NOT INTERESTED IN ANYONE BUT HIM!!
GET LOST, NOW!!!
DON'T EVER GO ON A GROUP DATE!!!

I KNOW ALL ABOUT GROUP DATES FROM DRAWING MANGA, OKAY?
AWW, C'MON.
ENOUGH ALREADY... IT WAS DUMB OF ME TO RELY ON YOU TWO IN THE FIRST PLACE...
WHAT DO I DO...!? I'M SCARED, AND I CAN'T GET HIM OFF ME ...!!!
.....!
BIKU! (FLINCH)
LET'S GET OUTTA HERE, JUST ME AND YOU!
GUI (GRAB)
FINE, I'M TAKING THIS ONE!
KYA!
YOU STUPID WOMAN!
IF YOU DON'T LIKE IT, THEN JUST SAY NO!
OWWW!
WHAT DO YOU THINK YOU'RE DOING?
GIRIRI (PULL)
YOU'VE NEVER ACTUALLY BEEN ON A GROUP DATE, HAVE YOU?
EVERYONE DOES IT.
IN A NUTSHELL, GROUP DATES ARE ABOUT TAKING BY FORCE, BEING TAKEN BY FORCE, OR SNATCHING SOMEONE AWAY. OBVIOUSLY.

YEAH.
I TOTALLY WANNA AVOID GETTING PAIRED UP...
YOU DON'T CARE ABOUT HITTING IT OFF WITH ANYONE?
UMM, SO YOU JUST WANT TO MAKE IT THROUGH THE GROUP DATE AND GET OUT OF THERE, RIGHT, MIKORIN?

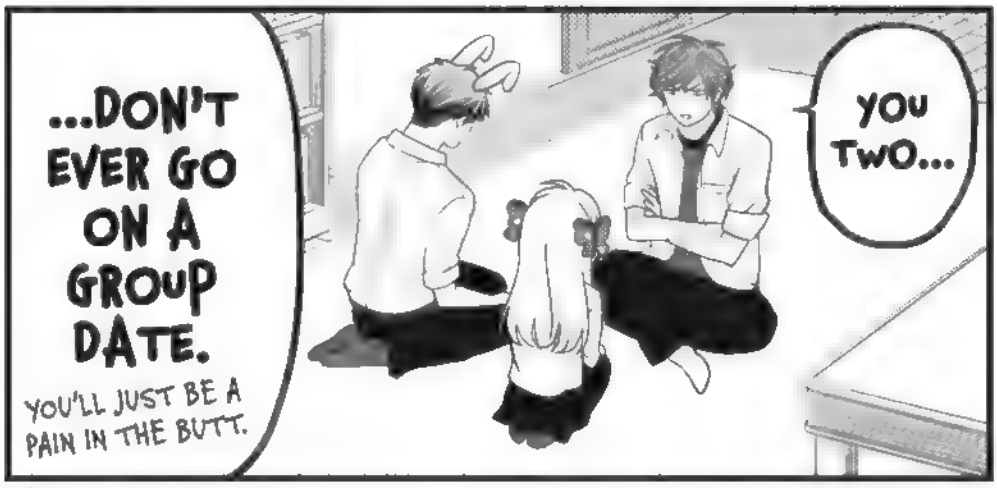

ISN'T THERE ANYTHING I CAN DO ABOUT THAT?
BOY
GIRL
BOY
GIRL
GIRL
BOY
GIRL
BOY
THE USUAL WAY
BUT THE WAY YOU END UP SITTING ALWAYS LEADS TO PEOPLE PAIRING OFF...


DOESN'T THAT SEEM REALLY UNNATURAL...?
HUH ...?
M
THEN WHAT IF YOU SIT AT THE END BY YOURSELF?
KINDA LIKE THE CLASS PRESIDENT!!


IT'S NOT A BIRTHDAY PARTY!!!
JUST ADD A CAKE... AND THERE YOU GO!!
NOT AT ALL.
TOTALLY NATURAL!!!

CONVERSATION SKILLS

H-HAVE YOU GONE ANY-WHERE LATELY?
I HAVEN'T LEFT THE HOUSE.
WHAT DO YOU DO ON YOUR DAYS OFF?
I DON'T HAVE DAYS OFF.
WHAT SORTS OF SHOWS DO YOU WA—
I PREFER INTERNET RADIO.



BUGH! (SNAP)
THE BATH-ROOM AGAIN !?
ANY-WAY...
C'MON, SAKURA!
...TALK TIME IS OVER.
GATA (CLATTER)

SCREW THAT !!!
S—
SORRY, MIKORIN ...!!
ENOUGH ALREADY, YOU TWO ...!!!
I CAN'T JUST SHUT UP AND TAKE THIS!
DAN (BAM)

LET ME GET IN ON IT TOO!!!
YOU'RE LEAVING ME OUT OF EVERY-THING!!!

THE GROUP DATE TURNED INTO A GIRLS' NIGHT OUT.
...HAVE TO HAVE THIS CONVER-SATION IN HERE ...?
HEY, DO WE...
OMIGOSH!
WE SHOULD GO HAVE SOME SOON.
SO, YOU KNOW, THE CAKE THERE WAS SOOOO GOOD!

I CAME IN MIKOSHIBA'S PLACE!
HEYA!
WELL, MIKOSHIBA BEGGED ME, SOOO...
YOU SURE?
BUT YOU ALREADY TURNED US DOWN!!
KASHI-MA!!
NOW I FEEL BAD FOR BUGGING HIM TO COME ALONG...
MAYBE HE'S NOT A FAN OF GROUP DATES OR SOMETHING ...?
SO HE'S ONLY INTO IT WHEN HE HAS THEM ALL TO HIMSELF !!!?
NAH. "I'M SURE I COULD FIT RIGHT IN IF IT'S JUST GIRLS...!!" IS WHAT HE SAID...

BUT STILL, I'M GLAD YOU'RE HERE, KASHIMA.
OH YEAH?
YOU BET.
SO NOW WE'RE THREE GUYS AND FIVE GIRLS!
YOU'RE A GIRL.
LESS COMPETITION IS A GOOD THING.

[ISSUE 22]

GOOD WORK. WELL, THEN THANKS VERY MUCH. ...
...I'VE MET HIM SEVERAL TIMES NOW, BUT I STILL DON'T KNOW WHAT SORT OF PERSON MIYAMAE-SAN IS.
OH?

I HAVE NO CLUE HOW OLD HE IS...
TWENTY-SEVEN.
I CAN'T TELL WHAT SORT OF STUFF HE'S INTO AT ALL.
BOOKS AND MOVIES.

BY THE WAY, HE AND MAENO-SAN ARE THE SAME AGE, BUT I HEARD THAT HE FAILED HIS COLLEGE ENTRANCE EXAMS TWICE, SO NOW HE'S THE JUNIOR.
OHH?
YOU EVEN KNOW THAT? YOU'RE ACTUALLY PRETTY CLOSE, AREN'T YOU?
HEH HEH.
YEAH, I GUESS SO.

I HEARD IT ALL FROM MIYAKO-SAN.
SO, I HEARD ..
...FROM MAENO-SAN...
OOOH!
ISN'T THAT A BREACH OF PRIVACY?

HUH? MIYAMAE-SAN...
...YOU'RE WEARING A SUIT TODAY?
DON'T SEE THAT VERY OFTEN.
YEAH.
WELL, I HAVE MY HIGH SCHOOL REUNION AFTER THIS.

REALLY, MIYA-MAE-KUN?
YOU'RE JUST GONNA FEEL OUT OF PLACE IF YOU WEAR SOMETHING YOU'RE NOT USED TO.
WE'RE ALWAYS WEARING CASUAL CLOTHES, AFTER ALL.
OH...
YOU THINK ...?

HEYYYY, MIYAMAE! LONG TIME NO SEE!
SO YOU'RE AT A PUBLISHING HOUSE? HOW'S THAT?
...HMM, LET'S SEE...

MY CO-WORKER SUCKS.
BISHI (SHARP)
WHAT'S THIS, MIYA-MAE-KUN?
EVERY-ONE ELSE IS WEARING A SUIT. YOU DON'T FIT IN AT ALL LIKE THAT!

I'M THE SENPAI BY TWO YEARS, THOUGH!
YEAH ...
OH YEAH, YOU TWO WORK AT THE SAME PLACE, RIGHT?
FOR REAL!!?
WHAT SORT OF STUFF HAVE YOU LEARNED FROM HIM?
PFFT!
... WELL ... MORE OR LESS.
IN THE OFFICE, THAT IS...
HUH!? SO...
...YOU'RE THE KOUHAI, MIYAMAE!? DO YOU TALK ALL POLITE TO HIM!?
WHAT SHOULD I TITLE THIS ONE?
LOOK! IT'S A NEW FLAVOR!!
THIS GIRL JUST ISN'T MY TYPE!!
WHA—!?
.....
... MAENO !!!
WAY TO GO...
WOOOOW !!!
BASHI (SMACK)
BASHI
BASHI
I GOT TO UNDER-STAND A LITTLE OF HOW A MANGA-KA FEELS.

NO ONE UNDERSTANDS

OH, BUT I GUESS YOU'D BE GOOD AT THAT, MAENO-KUN!!!
YOU LOOK LIKE YOU'D UNDER-STAND A GIRL'S HEART !!
AND YOU DID HAVE LOTS OF GIRL-FRIENDS!
YEAH, YEAH. IT MIGHT BE YOUR LIFE'S CALLING !!

BUT MIYAMAE-KUN, ARE YOU SURE YOU'RE CAPABLE OF THAT?
YOU'RE NOT SLACKING OFF JUST BECAUSE IT'S FOR GIRLS, ARE YOU?
BE SURE TO ASK MAENO-KUN IF THERE'S STUFF THAT'S TOUGH FOR YOU, OKAY?

THEY JUST DON'T GET IT...
おろ？…
ORO (PANIC)
Y-YEAH.
JUST 'COS YOU'RE A BIT CHUBBY DOESN'T MEAN YOU DON'T HAVE YOUR COOL POINTS TOO...
YOU DON'T GET IT EITHER!

SPEAKING OF YOUR WEIGHT, DIDN'T YOU USED TO BE SKINNY?
DID YOU RELAPSE?
YEAH.
IT'S NOT LIKE I EAT A WHOLE LOT OR ANYTHING.
I JUST GAIN WEIGHT AND THEN LOSE IT AGAIN...
FIRST YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL
THIRD YEAR OF HIGH SCHOOL
COL-LEGE
NOW
ISN'T IT 'COS OF MAENO !!?

A ROUGH JOB

I GOTTA SAY... THINGS SOUND ROUGH FOR YOU, MIYAMAE.
WHAT BROUGHT THAT UP ...?
WELL, WORKING IS PRETTY HARD...

...TOTALLY MY BOSS TAKES ADVANTAGE OF HIS POSITION...
AND I'M A SALESMAN. JUST WALKING AROUND DOESN'T GET RESULTS, YOU KNOW.
MY JOB'S TOUGH TOO.

OH YEAH, SAME HERE.
SEE, THIS MANGA-KA I'M WORKING WITH...

...KEEPS FIGHTING WITH ME OVER WHETHER WE SHOULD USE "TA-DAAA!" OR "DA-DA-DAAA!" AS A SOUND EFFECT WHEN A CHARACTER SHOWS UP...
YOUR WORK SOUNDS PEACEFUL. MUST BE NICE.
KYARARAAAN (DA-DA-DAAA)

HEY, DID YOU HEAR !?
HE'S THE EDITOR FOR A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL!
YUMENO-SOMETHING...
ARE YOU FOR REAL !!!?
THE REAL THING!?
YOU THINK SHE EVEN WEARS A UNI-FORM !!!?

HUH? YUMENO-SENSEI?
WELL, YEAH, SENSEI WEARS A UNIFORM, AND I DO GO TO SENSEI'S PLACE TO GET THE MANU-SCRIPTS...
WELCOME!
HUH !?
THE MANUSCRIPT'S DONE!!
YOU GO TO HER PLACE!?

YUP.
SENSEI ALWAYS COOKS AND IS ALWAYS ON ME TO EAT. MAYBE IT'S 'COS SENSEI LIVES ALONE.
H—
HOME-MADE FOOD !?
TEE-HEE!
I'M SO LONELY BY MYSELF...
SHE TOTALLY HAS A THING FOR YOU!

I WONDER IF KEN-SAN PREFERS WESTERN STYLE FOOD...
WHAT A SHAME...
NAH.
I BET HE JUST CAN'T GET OVER THE THOUGHT OF HAVING A HIGH SCHOOL GUY COOK FOR HIM...
EVEN THOUGH IT'S GOOD!

HUH?
YUME-NO-SENSEI?
WITH THE HIGH SCHOOL MANGA-KA!!?
YOU WORKED TOGETHER TOO, RIGHT?
H-HEY!!!
BATA (STOMP)
BATA
BATA
BATA

MUKI (BLUFF)
GREAT, YOU MADE IT.
WELL, YUMENO-SENSEI'S BIG, AND TOUGH, AND PROBABLY PACKING ON THE POUNDS.

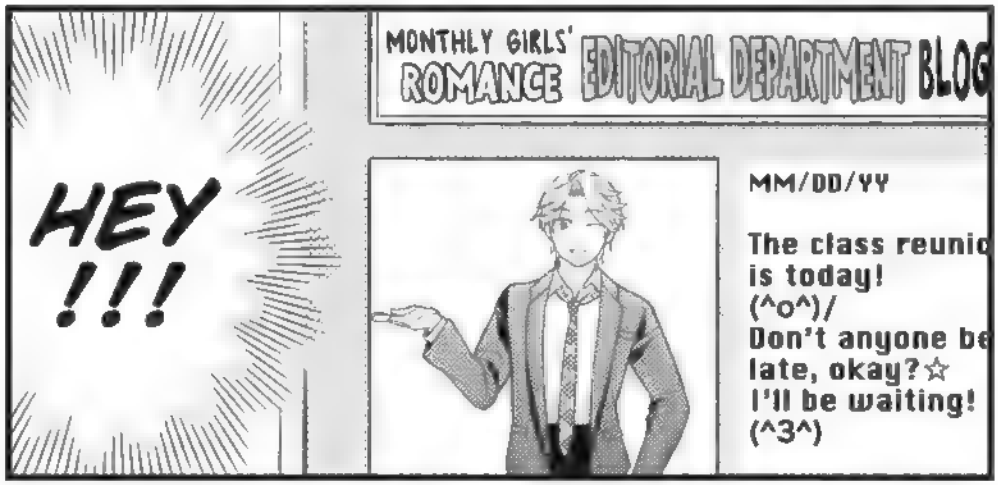
I WON'T LET HIM TRICK ME ...!!!
MAENO-SAN'S A PLAYER, AFTER ALL.
...IF HE GOT THE WRONG IDEA.
IT WOULD BE BAD...
ALSO, SENSEI'S REALLY SHY AND WAS ALWAYS HANGING UP THE PHONE RIGHT AWAY. SHE'D NEVER LET ME INTO THE APARTMENT EITHER.

PON (PAT)
.....
.....
PON
WHAT IS WITH YOU TWO?

IT'S BEEN ABOUT TEN YEARS, RIGHT?
HEY, MAENO! LONG TIME NO SEE!
IT'S OH! MAENO-KUN!

IS HE REALLY THAT UNIQUE?
WHY DOES EVERYONE REMEMBER EXACTLY WHAT MAENO LOOKS LIKE?
OH, WELL ...
...IT'S PROBABLY 'COS THEY READ HIS BLOG.

OH?
I'VE NEVER HEARD ABOUT IT...
WANNA SEE?
HE'S REALLY GOOD AT UPDATING IT WITH PICTURES OF HIMSELF.


HEY !!!
MONTHLY GIRLS' ROMANCE EDITORIAL DEPARTMENT BLOG
MM/DD/YY
The class reunio is today! (^o^)/
Don't anyone be late, okay?☆
I'll be waiting! (^3^)

DON'T ...
...BRING HIM OVER HERE!
GLITEEE (SLLLLLUMP)
KEN!
MAENO'S DRUNK!

MANGA PEOPLE ALWAYS GO ON ABOUT MANGA STUFF WHEN THEY GET DRUNK. IT'S REALLY ANNOYING.
NO WAY.
JUST TAKE CARE OF YOUR SENPAI, OKAY!?
COME ON!
MANGA ... UHHH...

I TELL YOU, MANGA'S ALL... YEAH.
THE PANEL LAYOUT 'N' STUFF'S, Y'KNOW... YEAH, LIKE...THIS. AND THE LINES'RE LIKE THAT.....
MANGA'S, UM...
...HM, YEAH, THAT.

...DOESN'T EVEN HAVE ANYTHING TO GO ON ABOUT!!!
HE...
'SRIGHT ...

HE REALLY DIDN'T WANT TO

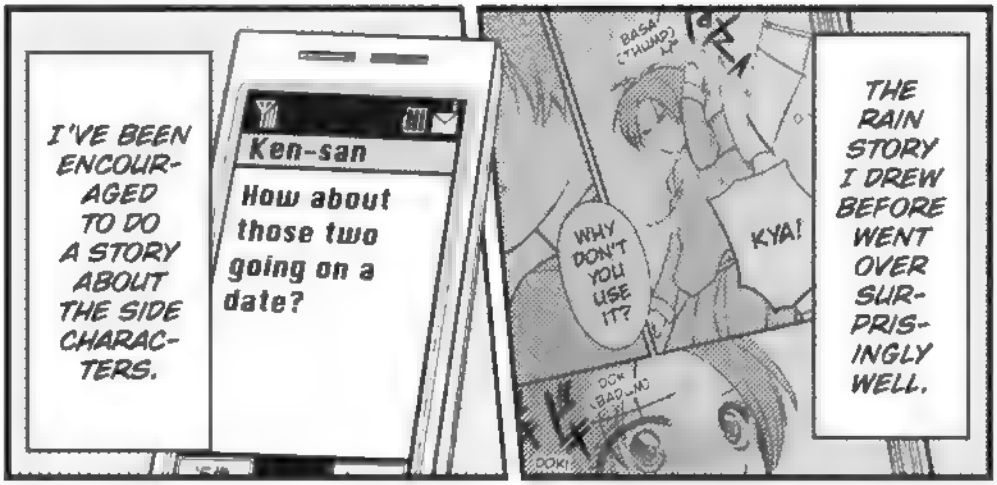
...IF I EVER END UP GETTING TRANS-FERRED OUT OF THE EDITORIAL DEPART-MENT... AND ...
...I'LL LET MIYAMAE-KUN TAKE OVER MY PRECIOUS BLOG AS THANKS!
Editorial Department BLOG
Today I'm... kinda badass!!

PRIVATE INFORMATION ②

...TALKED ABOUT HIS PERSONAL LIFE FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER!!!
HE SAID HE HAD A CLASS REUNION YESTER-DAY!!
KYU (SQUEAK)
O—
OHHH ...
GOOD FOR YOU.

HIYA!
I'M HERE TO PICK UP YOUR MANU-SCRIPT!
BORO (RAGGED)
WH—
YOUR FACE...!!!
WHAT HAP-PENED TO YOU!?
WELL, I WENT OUT DRINKING LAST NIGHT.
IT WAS HOR-RIBLE.
MIYAMAE-KUN SUDDENLY WENT ALL CRAZY.
KEN-SAN... IS IT TRUE THAT YOU WENT INTO A DRUNKEN RAGE AND BEAT UP MAENO-SAN...?
MAYBE YOU SHOULD CUT BACK ON THE BOOZE...
.....

[ISSUE 23]


I'VE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO DO A STORY ABOUT THE SIDE CHARACTERS.
Ken-san
How about those two going on a date?
BASA! (THUMP)
WHY DON'T YOU USE IT?
KYA!
THE RAIN STORY I DREW BEFORE WENT OVER SURPRISINGLY WELL.
DOK!

OH, BUT IT'S NOT LIKE I CAN'T COME UP WITH ANY STORIES OR IMAGINE THE TWO OF THEM ON A DATE. STILL...
BUT THE MODELS FOR THOSE TWO ARE WAKAMATSU AND SEO... I'M NOT SURE HOW I FEEL ABOUT DEVELOPING THEIR RELATIONSHIP...

NOZAKI-SENPAI.
SEO-SENPAI GAVE ME MOVIE TICKETS.
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
CAN I SAY NO?

I THINK...
...YOU SHOULD ABSOLUTELY GO.
AND THEN TELL ME HOW IT WENT.

I THOUGHT NOZAKI-SENPAI WOULD STOP ME FOR SURE...
BUT I GUESS RUNNING AWAY WHEN FACED WITH AN ENEMY IS PRETTY LAME, ISN'T IT...?
SENPAI KNOWS EVERYTHING.

EVEN SO, HOW DO I MAKE IT SO I END UP ON TOP...?

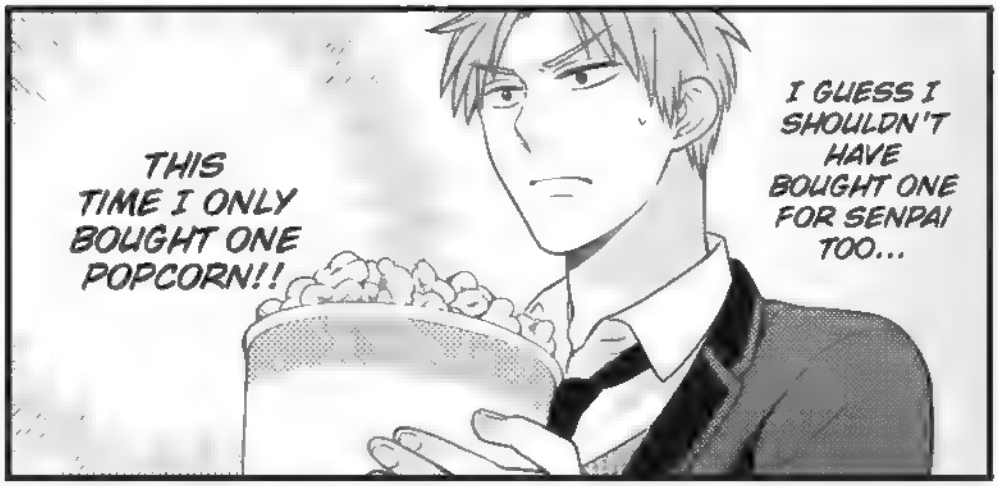
I'M SO MAD...!!
IT'S LIKE I'M HERE TO MAKE HER SHINE!!!
THAT'S IT!!!
HOH HOH HOH HOH HOH!
OH MY! WHAT IS WITH THAT PEASANT ATTIRE!?
YOU SEEM EVEN MORE PROVINCIAL WITHOUT YOUR UNIFORM!!

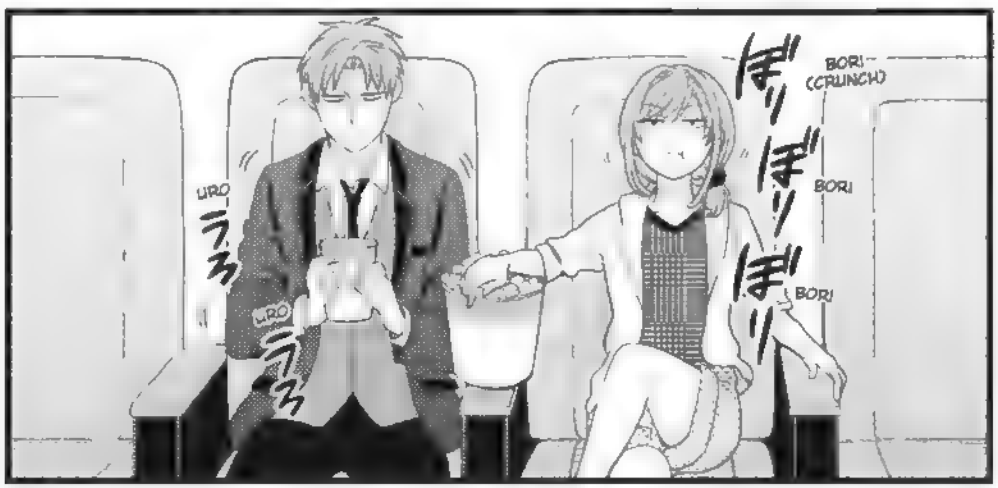
HUH!?
NO WAY ...!!!
WERE YOU THAT EXCITED ABOUT IT...?
YOU REALLY WENT ALL-OUT TODAY, DIDN'T YOU?
WHOA, WAKA.

I'VE NEVER THOUGHT ABOUT IT.
OH YEAH?
LEFT OR RIGHT...?
THE MOVIE THEATER KINDA MAKES YOU THINK ABOUT WHICH ARMREST YOU SHOULD USE, DOESN'T IT?
GABA (GRAB)
THIS ONE'S MINE!!
OH. ...
OKAY.
SORRY.
COULDN'T HELP MYSELF.

I KNOW!
I'LL PUT MY DRINK ON IT TO STAKE MY CLAIM...!!

URO
URO (FIDGET)


THIS TIME I ONLY BOUGHT ONE POPCORN!!
I GUESS I SHOULDN'T HAVE BOUGHT ONE FOR SENPAI TOO...


URO
URO
BORI (CRUNCH)
BORI
BORI

WELL ...
...IT'S NOT LIKE YOU'RE GOING TO WORRY ABOUT THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU ONCE THE MOVIE STARTS...
UH, YEAH.
わくわく
WAKU (EXCITED)
WAKU
I'M GLAD THERE'S NO ONE NEXT TO US!
OH!
IT'S ABOUT TO START...
... WAKA.

No way ...! Cathy !!!
GUSU (SNIFFLE)
ぐすっ...
You run! Leave me here ...!!
Wait ...!!!

DO (THUD)
DO
DO
DO
Nooooo !!!
DOSHA (CRUNCH)
GUSHA (SQUISH)
Waaah! Stop it!
ZUDOOON (THUNK)

HOW CAN SHE POSSIBLY BE THAT OFF BASE !!?
GERA (CACKLE)
GERA
GERA

YUZUKI'S POINT OF VIEW

COULD SHE BE THE TYPE WHO SYMPATHIZES WITH THE BAD GUY?
THERE ARE PEOPLE LIKE THAT.
You... be-trayed me ...!?
HA!
It's your fault for trusting me!
UGH...
...Or so we thought, but now there's a new enemy ...!!!?
Waa-aaah !!!
DON'T TELL ME SHE...
...JUST LIKES IT WHEN SOMEONE GETS KILLED !!?

!!?
BIKU (STARTLE)
GON (THUMP)
FURA (WOBBLE)
FURA
HEY!
SEO-SEN-PAI!?
GUUU (ZZZZ)
WH-WHOOPS!!
KAAA (BLUSH)
I KIND OF WANT TO SEE THAT.
ACK!
IT'LL BE PRETTY EMBARRASSING FOR HER WHEN SHE WAKES UP LIKE THIS...
WAIT A MINUTE ...
SHE STARTED MAKING HERSELF COMFORTABLE!!?
BORI (CRUNCH)
BORI
BORI

NO. I HAVE INSOMNIA...
HMM.
WOW.
YOU'RE NOT EVEN A LITTLE TIRED?
IT DOESN'T JUST HIT YOU WHEN IT GETS DARK?

HEY, I'VE HEARD THIS MUSIC BEFORE.

HM-HM-HMMM...

GUUU
GAKU (SLUMP)

THE IMPORTANT SCENES

NEVER MIND THAT! THAT ALIEN, MONALUPPO, WAS SO AMAZING!!
HE WAS TOTALLY THE STAR.
I HOPE HE'LL BE IN THE NEXT ONE TOO.
HUH ...?
WAS THERE EVEN A "MONA-LUPPO" IN IT?

SHARING OPINIONS

AND THEN WHEN THAT THING WENT SQUOOSH!
WHAT A MESS THAT WAS!
AND THEN IT WENT FLYING LIKE FWOOSH!
AND SQUELCH!
IT TOTALLY WENT SQUELCH!!!

ACTUALLY, I HAVE THESE TICKETS FOR THE SCREAM AMUSEMENT PARK, BUT ALL OF MY GIRLFRIENDS SAID NO.
絶叫
I'LL JUST INVITE TANAKA OR YAMAMURA INSTEAD OF YOU.
THOSE FIRST-YEAR BASKETBALL GUYS.

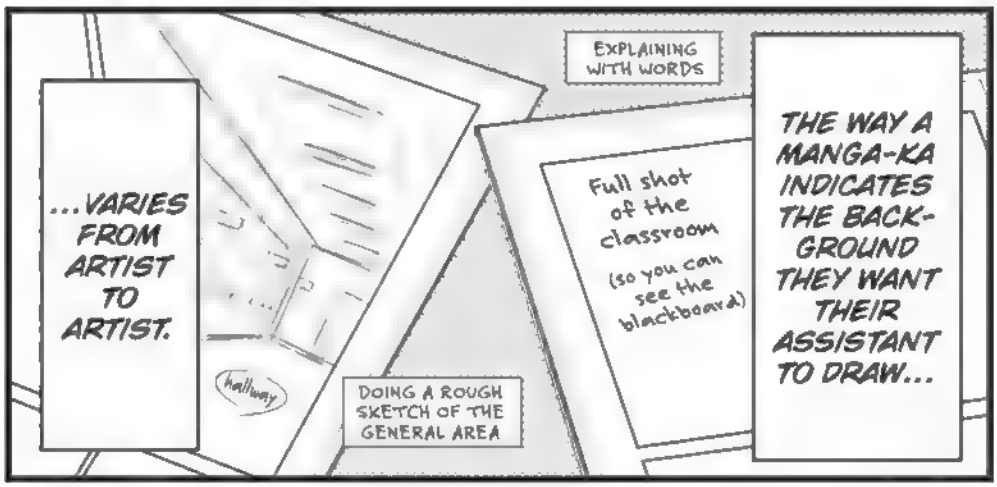
TICKET: SCREAM

THIS EPISODE'S RECAP

WHY ARE YOU ALWAYS SO NEGATIVE ABOUT THESE TWO, NOZAKI-KUN?
I BET SHE JUST GOT CAUGHT UP IN THE MOMENT...
I'M PRETTY SURE THAT'S NOT THE CASE.

YORO (STAGGER)
よろ
I WENT TO THE SCREAM AMUSEMENT PARK...
HE REALLY WENT!?
YORO
よろ
UGGGH...
CONQUERING THE ENTIRE THING TOOK SO LONG...
YOU GOT ON EVERY SINGLE RIDE!?
I GUESS WE'RE GOING TO THE ZOO NEXT.
動物園
ZOO TOUR OF TERROR!
恐怖ツアー
"FEED THE LIONS"
"WRAP A SNAKE AROUND YOUR NECK"
ライオンにエサやり!!!
首にヘビを巻こう!!!
YOU EVEN MADE MORE PLANS!?
YOU TWO ACTUALLY GET ALONG, DON'T YOU!!!?

[ISSUE 24]


...VARIES FROM ARTIST TO ARTIST.
hallway
DOING A ROUGH SKETCH OF THE GENERAL AREA
Full shot of the classroom
(so you can see the blackboard)
EXPLAINING WITH WORDS
THE WAY A MANGA-KA INDICATES THE BACK-GROUND THEY WANT THEIR ASSISTANT TO DRAW...

LIKE PERSPECTIVE AND STUFF...?
SO DRAWING BACK-GROUNDS REALLY IS HARD?
NAH...
IT'S JUST THESE DIREC-TIONS.
HMM.
THIS IS TOUGH ...

Something that feels nice
What-ever works
Somewhere at school

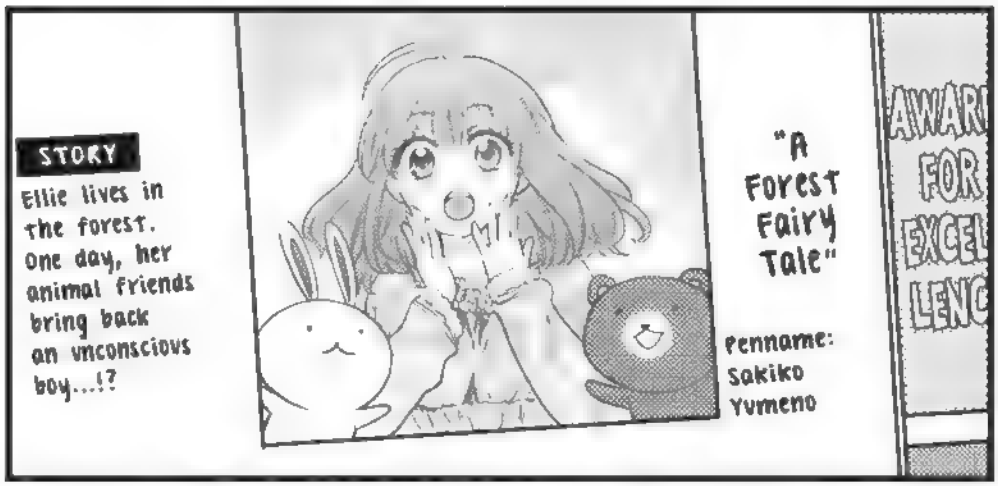
NOZAKI-KUN!!!
THERE'S A TEACHER HERE, SO MAYBE THE STAFF ROOM...? NO...BUT THERE ARE STUDENTS TOO, SO IT COULD BE THE HALLWAY...

THE ARTIST'S OPINION

NOZAKI-KUUUN!!
IT'D BE FASTER TO JUST ASK HIM INSTEAD OF TRYING TO FIGURE IT OUT!
OHH ... THIS SCENE ...
I THINK THE CLASSROOM OR AROUND THE SHOE RACKS MIGHT BE BEST.
HMM?
BUT THEY'RE IN THE GYM FOR THE NEXT SCENE.
...WELL, GENERALLY SPEAKING, IT'S ALL SOMEWHERE AT SCHOOL ...
IT'S OKAY. JUST RUN WITH IT.
WAI (CHATTER)
わいわい
WAI
THE WAY I SEE IT, THEY'RE IN THE PASSAGE HERE, COMING FROM OVER THERE LIKE THIS...
YEAH. THAT MAKES SENSE.
LET'S GO WITH THAT.
.....

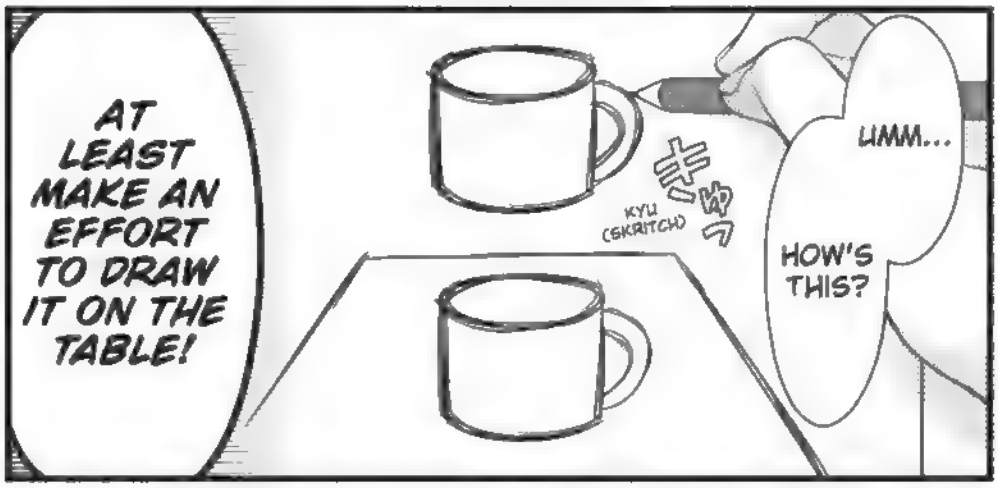
MAKING IT SO THEY WOULDN'T FIND OUT THAT I COULDN'T DRAW BACK-GROUNDS WAS PRETTY ROUGH...
TRUE ...
...HOW DID YOU EVER MANAGE TO MAKE YOUR DEBUT LIKE THIS ...?
NO-ZAKI-KUN...

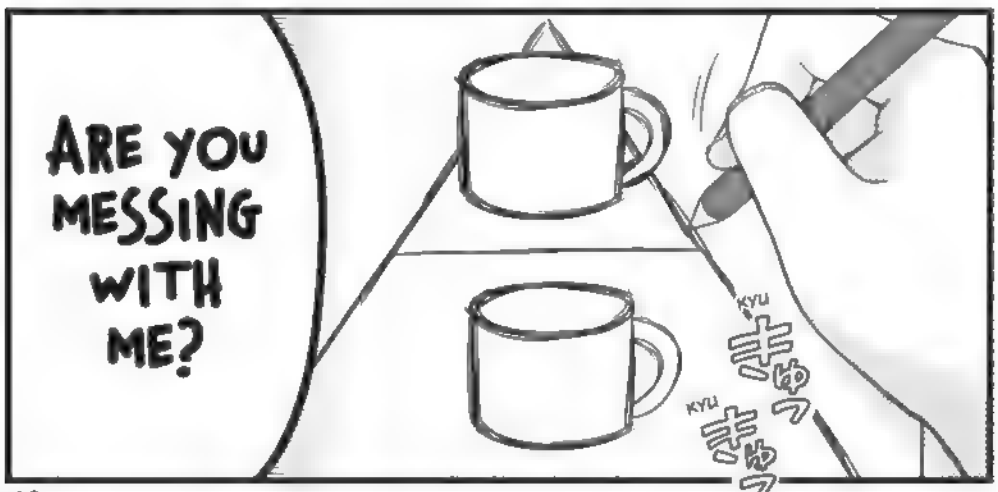
STORY
The mysterious boy she meets every night, only in her dreams. As they become closer, it bothers her even more— Just who are you anyway..?
"Boyfriend in the Dark"
Penname: Sakiko Yumeno
PROMISING NEW-COMER AWARD


STORY
Ellie lives in the forest. One day, her animal friends bring back an unconscious boy...!?
"A Forest Fairy Tale"
Penname: Sakiko Yumeno
AWARD FOR EXCEL LENC

YOU WORKED HARD ON THE WRONG THING!!!
WELCOME TO THE SQUISHY WORLD!!
This place she got lost in... could it be a wonderland?
A HEART-POUNDING DEBUT!

I'VE MADE PROGRESS





IS THERE SOMETHING ELSE!?
HERE, TAKE A LOOK.
WELL, IT'S NOT GREAT, BUT LET'S JUST SAY THE BACKGROUNDS ARE FINE LIKE THIS...

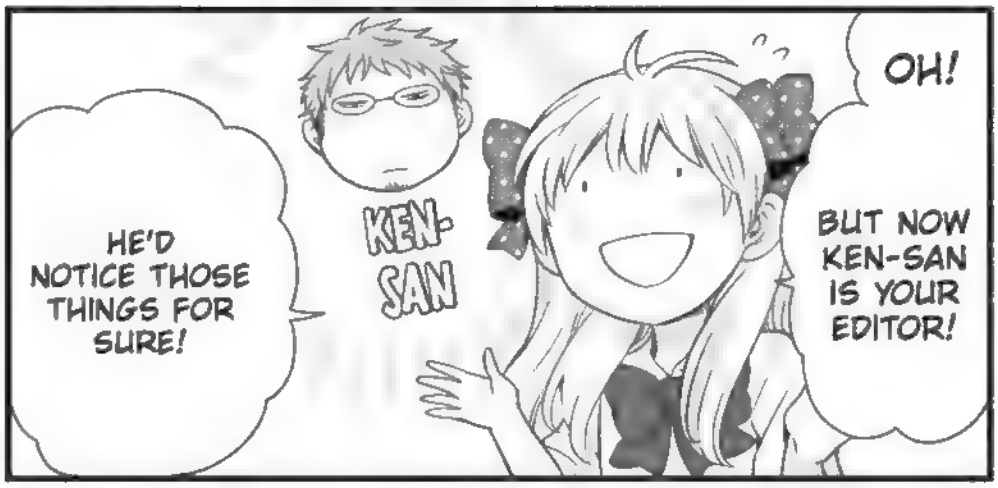
DOKI (BADUM)
DOKI
.....?
I DON'T SEE ANYTHING WEIRD...
MY RIGHT SHOULDER IS BURNING UP...!!
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
I'M SITTING NEXT TO SUZUKI-KUN...

LET'S COME HERE ALONE NEXT TIME.
SUZUKI-KUN...
GEEZ!
DON'T TEASE ME!!
WHOO! WHOO!
GATAN (CLATTER)
SAY "AH."
NO WAY...
HE'S DOING THAT HERE ...!?

...HOW MANY TIMES DID YOU CHANGE SEATS!?
YOU TWO...

HUH!?
BUT CAN'T YOU JUST LEAVE STUFF LIKE THAT TO THE EDITOR...?
IT'S SUCH A PAIN TO FIX ALL OF THIS STUFF WHILE THE STORY'S STILL BEING PUT TOGETHER ...

YOU'RE BOTH TOTALLY USE-LESS!!!
?
WHAT ARE YOU EVEN TALKING ABOUT?
MAENO-SAN WOULD NEVER NOTICE SOME-THING LIKE THAT.

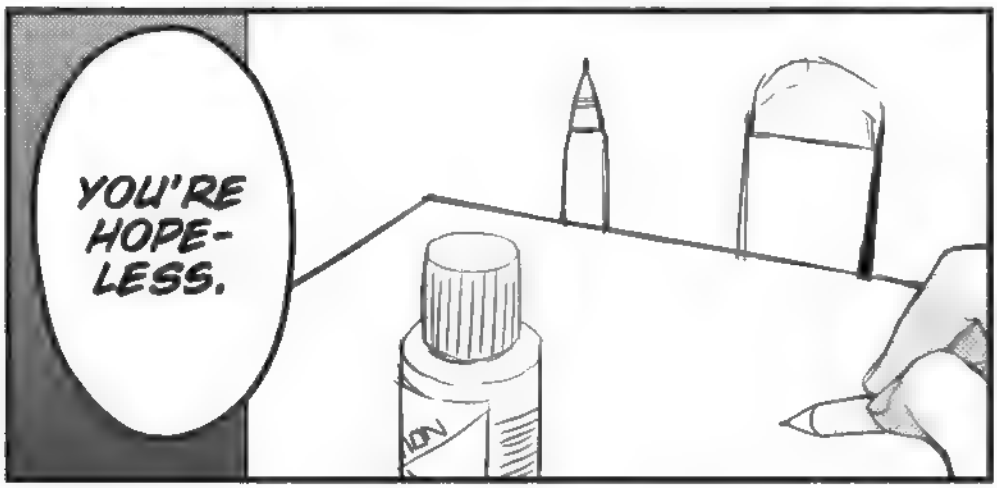

HE'D NOTICE THOSE THINGS FOR SURE!
KEN-SAN
OH!
BUT NOW KEN-SAN IS YOUR EDITOR!

SHOW IT TO HIM !!!
A—
ARE YOU SUGGESTING I SHOW KEN-SAN A PATHETIC DRAFT LIKE THAT...!?

IF I COULD DO THAT, I'D BE SOMEONE'S ASSISTANT!
DUH!
HOW CAN YOU SAY THAT AS A PRO?
FRIEND
FRIEND
SUZUKI
MAMIKO
MAMIKO IS ON SUZUKI'S LEFT.
LISTEN UP. TRY KEEPING THE SEATING ARRANGEMENT IN MIND WHILE YOU DRAW, OKAY?

THIS IS MAMIKO.
AND THIS IS SUZUKI.
FINE. THEN USE OBJECTS AND THINK ABOUT IT THAT WAY.

NOW HE CAN CHECK WHERE THEY ARE WHENEVER HE WANTS!
I GET IT!
U-UHH... THIS IS MAMIKO... AND THIS IS SUZUKI... SO...
YEP.
EVEN HE OUGH—


YOU'RE HOPELESS.

THEN...
...HOW ABOUT DOLLS?
OH!
IT WOULD BE EASIER TO IMAGINE IT IF THEY WERE AT LEAST HUMAN.

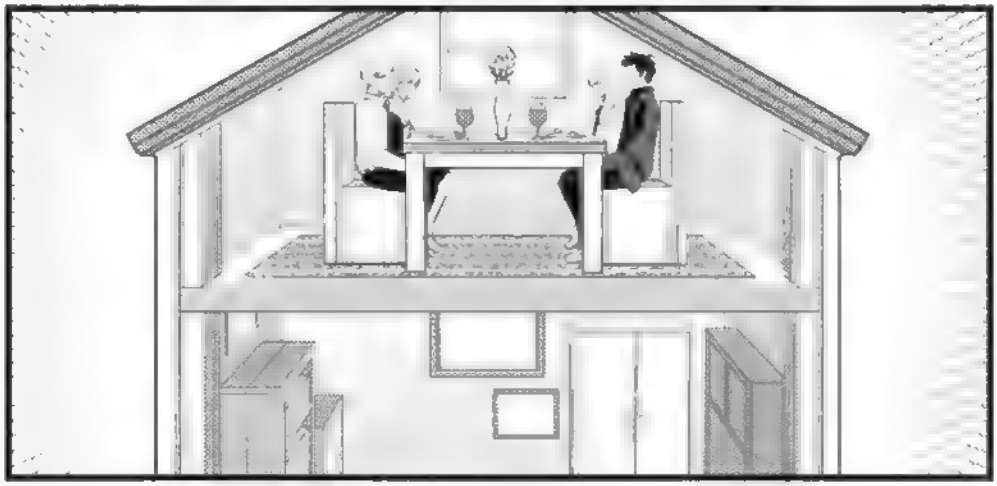
OHH!
KOTON (PLONK)
コトン
THAT'S NOT BAD!
THEN I'LL USE OSAMU-KUN HERE FOR SUZUKI'S MODEL.
I SEE!

COME TO THINK OF IT, WE MIGHT HAVE SOME OF MIKORIN'S HERE...
I WISH I HAD THREE MORE...
AH!
AND THEN ... ... MAMIKO, GIRL A, AND BOY B...

WHAT IS THIS, SUZUKI'S HAREM !!!?
ピチ
PICHI
PICHI (PERKY)
ピチ

I'M SURE IT'S FINE, BUT SHOW ME JUST IN CASE.
THAT'S WONDERFUL, NOZAKI-KUN!
THANKS, YOU TWO.
WITH THOSE MODELS, I THINK I FINALLY GOT IT RIGHT!
OH.
THEY'RE ACTUALLY IN THE RIGHT PLA...
I'M NERVOUS TOO.
IT'S NOT JUST YOU.
SUZUKI-KUN...
M— ME TOO ...!!!
... CES ...
NOZAKI-!!!
HA! HA! HA!
TOTALLY!
THEY REALLY ARE SHOWING OFF, AREN'T THEY?

NO WONDER YOU MAKE THE SETS FOR THE DRAMA CLUB!!!
OHHH!
I MADE YOU A TABLE WHILE I WAS AT IT, SO LOOK AT THIS AND MAKE IT WORK!
THE BACKGROUND GUY MADE IT FOR ME YESTERDAY.
OH.
WHAT IS THIS?
HELLO ... WHOA!
HMM ...
MIKORIN, WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
SO CREACHO



WHAT THE HECK ARE THESE TWO GUYS DOING?
WAKU (EXCITED)
WAKU
I WONDER IF HE'LL MAKE ME A KITCHEN NEXT!

PHEW!
OH?
WHAT ARE YOU MAKING THERE, SENPAI?

WOW!
IT'S A BUNCH OF TINY FURNI-TURE!
ARE WE GOING TO USE THESE IN THE NEXT PLAY?
NAH, THESE...
...ARE SOMETHING I'M MAKING FOR ME.

THEY'RE FOR DOLLS.

NOW SENPAI'S EVEN STARTED PLAYING WITH DOLLS...
IS HE OKAY ...?
TH—
THERE'S NOTHING WRONG WITH HAVING THAT FOR A HOBBY !!!
I THINK IT'S REALLY COOL!!!
GATA
GATA
CLATTER

STOP IT, NOZAKI !!!
DON'T PUT THE CHAIR THERE!!!
IT'LL RUIN THE BALANCE!!!
BIKU (TWITCH)
BIKU
NOZAKI.
MAKE SURE YOU PUT THE FURNITURE BACK AFTER YOU MOVE IT.
IT'S IN WEIRD PLACES.
NOTICE OF EVICTION

[ISSUE 25]

AN EXCITING WEAKNESS

...How do I say this...? Your hero may be a bit too much the perfect superman.
Yes. Don't you think it might be good to give him a weak-ness?
YOU MEAN SUZUKI?

WELL, IT'S TRUE. HE'S HARD TO IDENTIFY WITH.
THERE'S NO CHINKS IN HIS ARMOR!
IF THERE'S SOMETHING THAT HE'S KINDA HOPELESS AT, IT GETS YOU RIGHT THERE!!
YEAH.
SO I TRIED GIVING SUZUKI A WEAKNESS ...

DOOR: BOYS' CHANGING ROOM

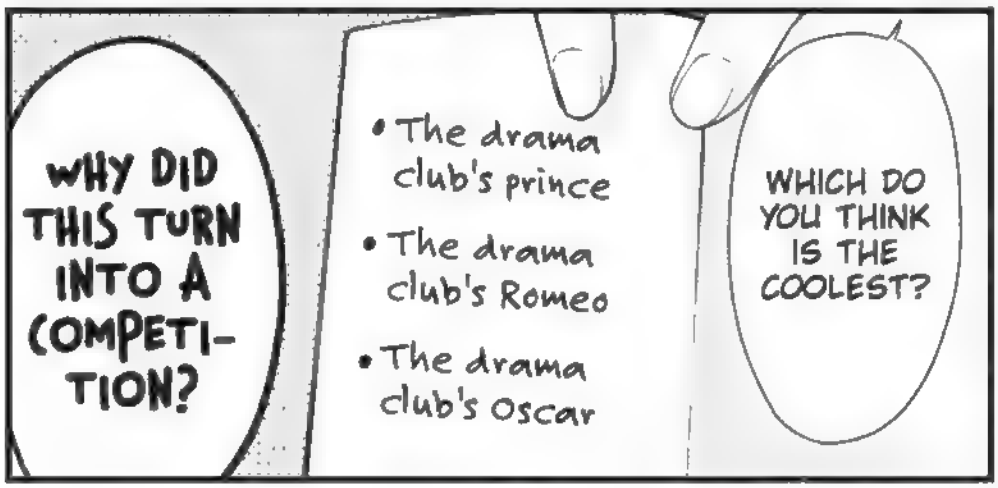
OH, AND THIS IS HOW I'M THINKING OF USING IT.
I-I'LL FOLD IT FOR YOU!!!
KAA (BLUSH)
DOKIN (BADUM)
男子更衣室
WHAT THE HELL IS MAMIKO DOING IN THERE!?

HUH?
LIKE WHAT, FOR EXAMPLE!?
WE WANT SOMETHING THAT'S MORE IN YOUR FACE AND UNEXPECTED!!!
YEAH, THAT'S RIGHT !!!
TO BEGIN WITH, THAT WEAKNESS IS WAY TOO MINOR !!!
IT'S GOTTA BE, Y'KNOW...!! MORE LIKE THIS!!!

SUZUKI-KUN!!?
FURAAA (WOBBLE)
AH...
IT'S THE GAP THAT MAKES IT GOOD.
...LIKE THAT.
"HE'S SO TOGETHER USUALLY, BUT HE FAINTS AT THE SIGHT OF BLOOD."
HMM.

SUZUKI-KUN!!!
YOU JERK !!!
...THAT COULD WORK TOO!
"HE'S ACTUALLY REALLY GOOD AT FIGHTING, AND ONCE HE SNAPS, YOU CAN'T STOP HIM!!"
IF YOU WANT A GAP, GOTTA GO FOR THE OPPOSITE.

WHY DID YOU COMBINE THEM?
DOGO (THWACK)
FURAAA
AH...!
LIKE THIS?


WHY DID THIS TURN INTO A COMPETITION?
• The drama club's prince
• The drama club's Romeo
• The drama club's Oscar
WHICH DO YOU THINK IS THE COOLEST?

*OSCAR IS A REFERENCE TO THE PROTAGONIST OF THE SHOUJO MANGA CLASSIC THE ROSE OF VERSAILLES BY RIYOKO IKEDA, WHICH IS SET IN FRANCE DURING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION. OSCAR IS A WOMAN WHO WAS BROUGHT UP AS A MAN BY HER FATHER TO SUCCEED HIM IN HIS POST AT THE ROYAL COURT. SHE WORKS AS COMMANDER OF THE ROYAL GUARD IN THE COURT OF MARIE ANTOINETTE AND IS PORTRAYED IN MEN'S GARB.

NO! WELL, I DON'T REALLY KNOW ANYONE IN THE GLEE CLUB...
AND IT'S ALL GIRLS...
?
HUH !?
BUT IF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHO SHE IS, WHY DON'T YOU JUST GO IN AND SEE FOR YOURSELF?
...WOW...!! HORI-SENPAI'S SO RELIABLE...
'SCUSE ME!
GARA (SLIDE)
ガラッ
I'M GONNA GO HAVE A LOOK.
HOW DID IT GO!?
H—
SORRY FOR BUGGING YOU.
ガラッ
GARA
HE FORGOT WHY HE WENT IN THERE ...!!!
WE SHOULD DO A MUSICAL!

SUPER-POPULAR PRINCE
PERFECT
SPEAKING OF WEAKNESSES, IS THERE ANYTHING THAT KASHIMA-KUN'S NOT GOOD AT?
KASHI-MA, HUH ...?

YOU KNOW, SHE'LL JOIN US PRETTY MUCH ANYWHERE, BUT...
...SHE ALWAYS REFUSES TO GO TO KARAOKE WITH US...
I'M GOOD!

AGH!
MAYBE SHE'S ...!!!
TONE-DEAF ...?
TONE-DEAF ...!!!

THE TYPE WHO MAKES THINGS WEIRD 'COS SHE CAN ONLY SING OBSCURE ANIME SONGS!!!
OH! BUT THE COMPOSER IS FAMOUS!
O-OHHH
YOU'RE DEFI-NITELY TALKING ABOUT YOUR-SELF THERE!
SUPER-AWKWARD!!

AM I TONE-DEAF !?
HUH !?
THEY WENT AND ASKED HER.

THAT'S NOZAKI-KUN.
KA-SHIMA-KUN.
!!?
GASSHI (RUFFLE)
ガッシ
HAHAHAHAHAHA
ガッシ
...
GASSHI
REALLY! GOSH, C'MON! CHIYO-CHAN!!!
N-NO WAY !!!

IT'S UNEXPECTED, AND THAT'S KINDA NICE!
NOT REAL-LY.
NO.
I DON'T CARE.
RIGHT, MIKO-RIN!!?
WAAAAH!
YOU'RE MAJORLY LET DOWN, AREN'T YOU !!!?
THAT'S RIGHT! I'M TONE-DEAF !!! HAVE I LET YOU DOWN !?
AAAH!!

HE'S DOWN ABOUT SOME-THING TOTALLY DIFFER-ENT ...!?
GAKKARI (SAD)
ガックリ...
OH...
YOU'RE JUST TONE-DEAF...

HORI-SENPAI SAID SOMETHING ABOUT IT TOO?
?
WHAT'S UP WITH TODAY ...?
FIRST THE PRESIDENT, NOW YOU GUYS...
...ACTU-ALLY...
...EAR-LIER...
...I RAN INTO THE PRESI-DENT...
KASHIMA!!! LET'S TAKE ON A MUSICAL FOR OUR NEXT PRODUC-TION!!
YOU CAN SING, DANCE, WALK A TIGHT-ROPE, DO A BACK-FLIP...
...AND JUMP THROUGH A RING OF FIRE, RIGHT!!!?
—HE SAID !!!
WAAAAHH!
WAIT.
IS HE REALLY TALKING ABOUT A MUSICAL?

I THINK I CAN MAKE EVERY-THING BUT THE SINGING WORK SOME-HOW...
JUST THAT SINGING...
SOME-HOW...?
WHAT IF YOU HAVE SOMEONE WHO'S GOOD AT SINGING TEACH YOU...?
OH!!!

HUNH?
YOU WANT ME TO TEACH YOU HOW TO SING?
FINE.
GET DOWN ON THE FLOOR AND BEG ME. SAY, "PLEASE TEACH ME, SEO-SAMA."

YUZUKI !!!
HONESTLY!!!
I'M ALWAYS GETTING ASKED TO DO STUFF LIKE THIS.
MOST OF THEM GIVE UP WHEN I SAY THAT.
OH, MY BAD.
THAT'S A BAD HABIT.

HUH?
SO I JUST HAVE TO GET DOWN ON THE FLOOR?
THERE WE GO.
SHE'S GOT SOME BAD HABITS TOO!!!

JUDGING THE RAW MATERIAL

HUH ...
SO YOU HAVE A SENSE OF RHYTHM, AND YOU CAN PLAY AN INSTRUMENT.
AHA!
YEAH.
BUT FOR SOME REASON, I JUST CAN'T SING.
IS THERE ANYTHING WE CAN DO?

GIVE ME A CHOICE WITH A LITTLE MORE HOPE!
WHICH DO YOU LIKE BETTER?
YOU CAN GIVE UP RIGHT NOW.
OR YOU CAN PRACTICE ALL THE TIME FOR A YEAR AND THEN GIVE UP.

I JUST WANT TO GET TO THE POINT WHERE HORI-SENPAI CAN SAY, "OH, SHE'S KINDA BAD AT THIS" AND LAUGH IT OFF...
IT'S NOT LIKE... I WANT TO GET REALLY GOOD OR ANYTHING...

SO IT'D BE FASTER TO DO SOMETHING ABOUT SENPAI!!?
OR MAKE HIM FORGET HE EVER HAD THE IDEA.
WE COULD MAKE SENPAI HATE MUSICALS.
WHICH DO YOU PREFER?

IT'S SEO-SEN-PAI ...!!!
OH!
GARA (SLIDE)
ガラ
SIGN: GLEE CLUB

ONE! TWO!
OKAY! HERE WE GO!
MAYBE SHE'S AT LEAST GOOD AT SINGING, EVEN IF SHE'S NOT ON LORELAI'S LEVEL...
THAT'S RIGHT. SHE'S IN THE GLEE CLUB TOO...

WAAAAH!
WH—
WHAT'S WRONG, WAKA-MATSU !!?
IT'S JUST TOO MUCH! I JUST FEEL WAY TOO SORRY FOR HER ...!!!
TO BE THAT BAD, EVEN IF IT'S JUST A CLUB...!!

WAKAMATSU'S KINDNESS

I'll stop at nothing, boyyy!
• In truth, adds "boyyy" to the ends of his sentences. Examples: "I'm hungry, boyyy!" "I'm just too popular, boyyy!"
• Refuses to acknowledge any handsome guys other than himself. Crushes them with all his might.

C'MON!!! IT'S JUST NOT FAIR FOR HIM TO HAVE ALL THOSE STRENGTHS!!!
APOLOGIZE TO SEO-SENPAI!!!
WAAAAAAH!
STOP IT!!! DO YOU HAVE A GRUDGE AGAINST SUZUKI OR SOME-THING !!!?

ANSWER UNKNOWN

JI (STARE)
THERE HAS TO BE SOMETHING GOOD ABOUT SENPAI!!!
WHAT IS IT ...?
WHAT IS IT ABOUT HER...?
FOR REAL !?
WAKA-MATSU'S BEEN GIVING SEO-SENPAI THESE PAS-SIONATE LOOKS LATELY...
WHAT THE HELL DOES HE SEE IN HER ...!?
LET'S ASK HIM NEXT TIME!!

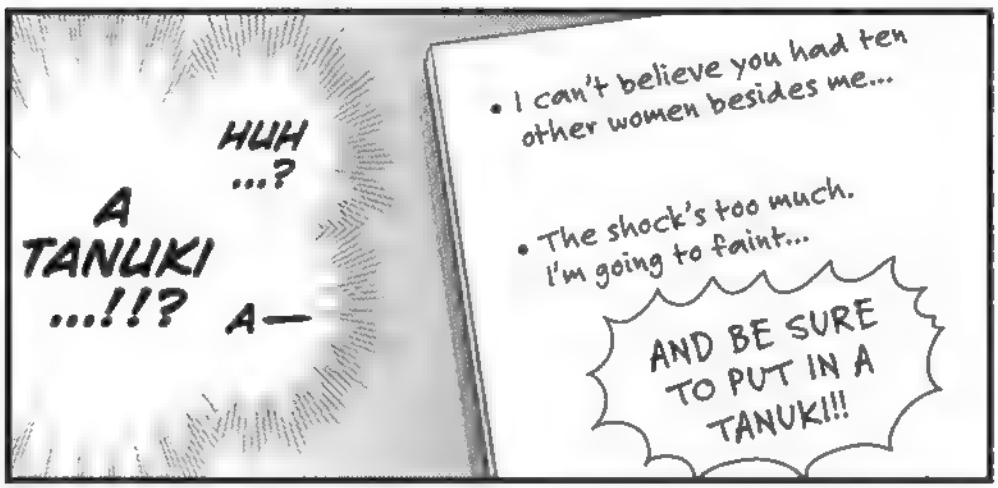
[ISSUE 26]

I'M YU-KARI MIYA-KO.
I'M A SHOUJO MANGA-KA.
I'M MAKING SURE NO ONE FINDS OUT SO I CAN LIVE A NORMAL COLLEGE LIFE WHERE I FIT IN.
HUH? WHERE'S YUKARI?
OH, SHE'S ON THE PHONE.
KY-AAAA!
OHH? MAYBE IT'S HER BOY-FRIEND!
LET'S GO LISTEN IN!!!
I'M SO SORR-Y ...!
UM, I'M AT SCHOOL RIGHT NOW, SO I'LL CALL YOU THIS EVENING ...
PEKO (BOW)
PEKO
Y-YES! I'LL ...
...BE SURE TO GET IT ALL READY ON TIME ...!!!
A DEBT COL-LEC-TOR ...
THAT WAS MY PART-TIME JOB!
NIGHT WORK ...
AN INDULGENT LIFESTYLE ...!!!
IT'S JUST MAKING HER STICK OUT MORE.

WHAT? BUT I HEARD THAT YUKARI DOES HAVE A BOY-FRIEND.
A LONG-DISTANCE ONE.
HUH!?
GET OUTTA HERE !!!
A LONG DISTANCE BOY-FRIEND? WHAT'S HE LIKE!?
THAT'S NEW!!!

ACTUALLY, SHE WAS WRITING A LETTER TO HIM ON THE SLY DURING OUR LECTURE...
KOSO (SNEAK)
KOSO

IT'S SO BAD IT HURTS!!!
AND WAS THAT SECOND HALF A POEM OR SOME-THING !!!?
WHY WAS IT ITEM-IZED !!?
I TOOK A LOOK YESTER-DAY, AND...
BUT THE GUY IS A TOTAL JERK ...
• I was so happy to see you after so many years.
• I want to be with you even more!
• A retreating back
Footsteps following behi
A gesture of good-bye


HUH ...?
A TANUKI ...!!?
A—
• I can't believe you had ten other women besides me...
• The shock's too much. I'm going to faint...
AND BE SURE TO PUT IN A TANUKI!!!

SORRY TO MAKE YOU JOIN ME FOR TEA...
... NOZAKI-KUN, CHIYO-CHAN.
I'M JUST STUCK.
IT'S OKAY.
I NEEDED A BIT OF A BREAK MYSELF.
YAAAY!

THE TRUTH IS, I WAS ASKED TO MAKE MY PROTAGONIST A HIGH SCHOOL GIRL THIS TIME, BUT I JUST DON'T KNOW HOW SHE'D TALK...
I HAVE NO CLUE ABOUT THAT STUFF EITHER...
THIS BRAND... THAT FASHION...
OH!
IS THERE ANYTHING YOU'VE BEEN PARTICULARLY INTO LATELY, SAKURA?
HUH? UMM ...

OH!
You know, I have been really obsessed with canned corn soup recently!
I'd given up on being able to eat all of the corn...
...but Yuzuki came up with a way to scrape it all out, and it's so totally amazing, and—

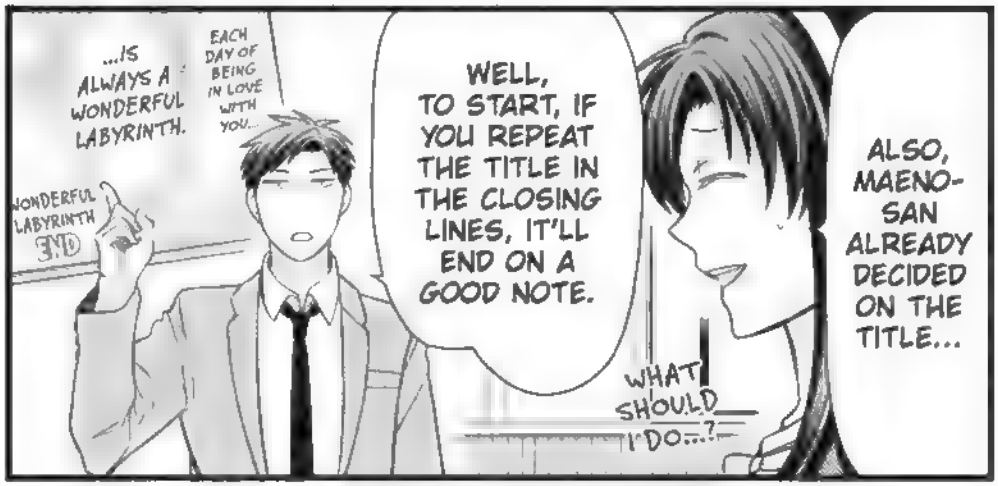
NADE
なで
NADE (PAT)
なで
WHAT!!?
HUH!?
HUH!?

OH! LOOK AT THAT!
WHOA! ISN'T THAT THE BAG THAT EVERYONE'S DYING TO GET...!!?
AND I SAW THAT OUTFIT IN A MAGAZINE JUST LAST WEEK!!
HER STYLE'S SO ON POINT!!
OHHH!

THAT REALLY DOES MAKE HER LOOK LIKE A MODERN GIRL!!
IT MAKES THE READER THINK THAT'S HOW IT IS IN THIS WORLD.
KARI (SKRITCH)
KARI
I SEE ...

LOOK!! IT'S MAMIKO!!
SHE'S JUST AN ORDINARY HIGH SCHOOL GIRL!!
SHE'S STILL SUPER-POPULAR!!
BUT HER FACE IS SUPPOSED TO BE PLAIN!!
SO I GUESS BEING POPULAR IS ALL ABOUT, YOU KNOW... YOUR INNER BEAUTY ...
NOZAKI-KUN, THEY'RE STARTING TO MAKE EXCUSES FOR YOU.

DISTRIBUTORS OF THE INFORMATION THE CREATOR WANTS TO CONVEY


...IS ALWAYS A WONDERFUL LABYRINTH.
EACH DAY OF BEING IN LOVE WITH YOU...
WONDERFUL LABYRINTH
END
WELL, TO START, IF YOU REPEAT THE TITLE IN THE CLOSING LINES, IT'LL END ON A GOOD NOTE.
WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
ALSO, MAENO-SAN ALREADY DECIDED ON THE TITLE...

OH.
"FOREST OF THE TANUKI."
YUP.
SO WHAT'S THE TITLE?

...THE FOREST OF THE TANUKI ...
YES ... THIS IS...
WIPE AWAY YOUR TEARS...
...AND TAKE MY HAND.

AN INTRUDER

THAT'S ODD.
WHO'S SHE HERE WITH ...?
HUH?
IT'S YUKARI.

AND WHAT'S WITH THIS GLOOM AND DOOM...?
IS THIS GUY THE BOY-FRIEND !!?
HUH!!? A HIGH SCHOOL BOY!!?

PATA (PATTER)
PATA
PATA
NO WAY... HE'S YOUNGER ...!? GOSH, AM I GLAD I DIDN'T JUST BARGE IN ON THIS SUPER-INTENSE-LOOKING SITUATION OR WHAT...

WHOA ...!!! WAIT ...!
RIB-BONS !!!
THE CAKE OF THE DAY IS CHEESE-CAKE!!
IT LOOKED SOOO GOOD!!!
YOU GUYS !!

IT'S ABOUT SUZUKI AND MAMIKO

...I'VE BEEN IN A BIT OF A RUT ...
...AND I'VE BEEN THINKING ABOUT ADDING A NEW GIRL TO THE MIX.
WHAT THE HELL DOES HE THINK HE'S DOING, SAYING THAT TO HIS GIRL-FRIEND'S FACE!!!?

OH YEAH.
WOULDN'T ADDING IN A NEW BOY WORK TOO?
AND WHAT'S SHE SAYING !!?
IT MIGHT ALSO BE INTEREST-ING TO HAVE A BREAKUP FOR A BIT...
YOU'RE BEING WAY TOO CASUAL ABOUT IT!!!

WHAA—!!? DO YOU HAVE ANY IDEA HOW SAD PEOPLE ALL OVER THE COUNTRY WOULD BE WITH A BREAK-UP!!!?
GASHAAAN (CRAAASH)
AND YOU'RE TAKING IT WAY TOO FAR!!!

WHY IS RIBBONS WORKING SO HARD FOR YUKARI ANYWAY...?
OKAY, FINE.
THERE CAN'T BE A BREAK-UP! ABSO-LUTELY NOT!!
AND WITH YUKARI BEING SO SPACEY, MAYBE THAT GIRL'S TRYING TO ACT AS A GO-BETWEEN FOR THEM...
SHE'S WEARING THE SAME UNIFORM AS THE GUY. MAYBE THEY'RE CLASS-MATES...
SHE SHOULD PROBABLY DO SOMETHING ABOUT THE GUY'S CHEATING FOR SURE... THAT'S FIRST.
FIRST .....
LET'S SEE... ...
CHIYO-CHAN. WHAT DO YOU THINK I SHOULD DO?
HEY, RIB-BONS !!!
...I THINK YOU NEED TO FOCUS ON DOING SOMETHING ABOUT THE TANUKI.

IT'S ABOUT THE CHARACTERS' OUTFITS

THEY SUDDENLY JUMPED TO DATE PLANS!!?
HEY, YOU'RE RIGHT!
YOU KNOW, IT'S ALMOST SWIM-SUIT SEASON.
NO, THIS ISN'T A TOPIC A GUY'S GONNA GET INTO...
WHAT DO YOU THINK, NOZAKI-KUN?
I'M THINKING A FLOWER PRINT BIKINI THIS YEAR...
H—
HE'S GONNA WEAR IT!!?
IT HAS A CUTE SORT OF APPEAL.
I'M GOING WITH RED, POLKA DOTS, AND A FRILLY SKIRT.
RIB-BONS !!!
YA'AAAAY!
I CAN'T WAIT TO SEE THEM BOTH!

WANDERING OFF SOMEWHERE!

HUH? WHERE'D SHE GO?
そろ〜
KYORO
そろ〜
KYORO (GLANCE)
THIS IS BAD, YUKARI!!!
IF YOU DON'T KEEP AN EYE ON HIM, HE'S GONNA WANDER OFF TO SOMEONE ELSE!!!

MAYBE I SHOULD TRY MAKING CAKE AT HOME SOME-TIME.
I THINK CAN DO IT.
HUH!? REALLY!!?
CHEESE-CAKE!?
HE'S ...
... GONNA BRING HER TO HIS PLACE TOO!?

WHAT DO YOU THINK, MIYAKO-SAN?
OH ...
NO, UM...
YEAH, FOR REAL!!! YOU WERE JUST TALKING ABOUT BREAKING UP, AND NOW YOU'RE CASUALLY INVITING HER OVER !!!?

INSTEAD OF CHEESE-CAKE...
...I'D MUCH RATHER HAVE A CREAM-BASED CAKE.
WILL YOU MAKE ONE FOR ME?

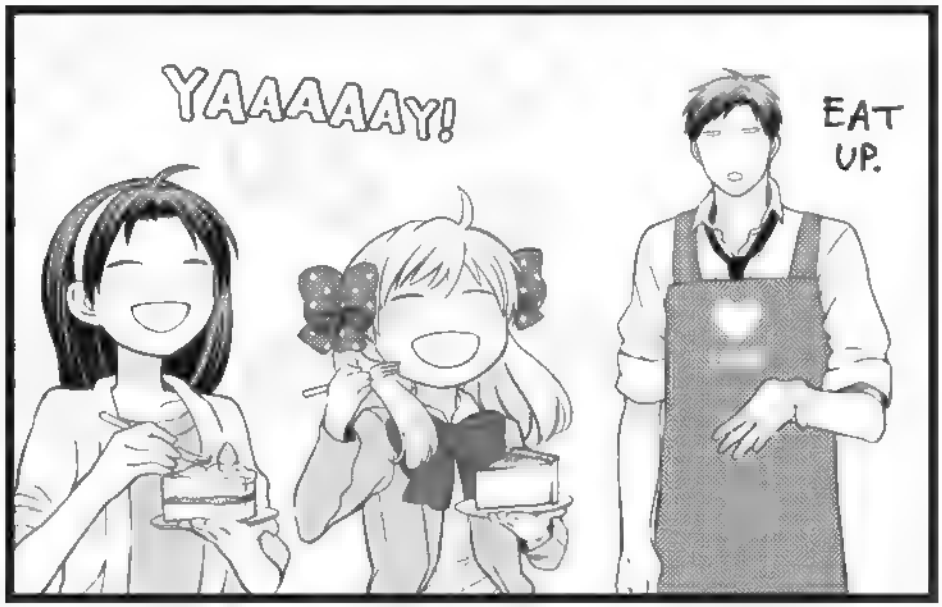
GAN (THUD)

AHH, BUT IT WAS REALLY STRESS-FUL FOR ME...
JUST GET OUT OF HERE ALREADY...
IT LOOKS LIKE THE BREAKUP TALK GOT RESOLVED PEACE-FULLY IN THE END.

OH, NO...
NO ONE WANTS TO GET CAUGHT UP IN ANOTHER COUPLE'S BREAKUP. SERIOUSLY...
REALLY.
SORRY FOR MAKING YOU TAG ALONG LIKE THIS, CHIYO-CHAN.

I'D LOVE TO DO IT AGAIN!!
IT WAS REALLY FUN!!

WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT!!? GIVE ME THE DE-TAILS!!!
HUH!?
THESE DAYS!!?
GATA (CLATTER)
GATA
HIGH SCHOOL GIRLS THESE DAYS ARE REALLY SCARY...


YAAAAAAY!
EAT UP.

THE SKY WAS CLEAR AND BLUE.
IT WAS THE START OF A NICE, REFRESH-ING DAY.
.....OR SO IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN.
[ISSUE 27]
WHAT HAP-PENED?

FOR THE NEW RIVAL WHO'S THREATENING SUZUKI...
GIN (GLARE)
...WE'RE STUDYING THE BEHAVIOR OF BAD BOYS WITH A HINT OF DANGER TO THEM.

SO DON'T TALK TO US.
SUTA (STRIDE)
すたすたすた
SUTA
HUH !?
'COS WE'RE BAD BOYS.
WHAT !!?
すたすた
SUTA
SUTA

SO I'M BEING LEFT OUT...?
しゅん
SHUN (DROOP)
?
!?
DA (DASH)

そわ
SOWA
そわ
SOWA
そわ
SOWA (FIDGET)
THEY'RE WAITING FOR MY CRITIQUE !!?

WELL, A BAD GUY'S MORE ATTRACTIVE THAN SOMEONE WHO'S JUST NICE, ISN'T HE?
KORO (ROLL)
KORO
SO WHY A BAD BOY CHARAC-TER IN THE FIRST PLACE?
YEAH ...
SO TODAY, FOR OUR FIRST STEPS AS BAD BOYS...
THE REBELLION ITSELF IS ROMANTIC.
A WILD DOG, NOT SOME PET, BEARING HIS FANGS AT THE WORLD.
THAT'S JUST A KID ACTING OUT!!!
...BUT I FORGOT MY HOME-WORK TOO!!!
...NOT ONLY DID I STAY UP LATE...
BAN (TA-DAA)
WHAT ARE YOU EVEN REBELLING AGAINST !!!?
...DIDN'T DO THE LAUNDRY !!!
AND TO MAKE THINGS WORSE, TODAY I...
EVEN THOUGH THE WEATHER'S SO NICE!!!

WE'LL KEEP ON FIGHTING

HUH? ME?
UMM, WELL...
THEN IN YOUR MIND, WHAT DO THE DELINQUENT BOYS DO?

THE HELL WITH CLASS!
TCH!
... DITCHING CLASS TO GO OFF SOME-WHERE.
OR ...
AWW, SHUT UP.
HEY!!! YOU'RE LATE!!!
GARA (SLIDE)
THE COMMON THING IS BEING LATE FOR SCHOOL.

YEAH ...
BE EVEN MORE OBVIOUSLY LATE, SKIP CLASS EVEN MORE...
I SEE... SO WE SHOULD GO ONE STEP FURTHER.

THAT'S JUST TRUANCY!
...WE JUST DON'T GO TO SCHOOL !!!
SO BASI-CALLY ...

O—
OKAY ...
SWOON!
I'M GONNA TRY SOME STUFF, SO YOU HOLD UP THIS SIGN IF IT WORKS FOR YOU.
HMM... I JUST DON'T GET IT...

—YEAH, IF A KINDA SCARY BOY CAME TO SAVE THE HEROINE, THAT WOULD BE A BIT EXCITING ...!!!
YOU BASTARDS ARE BEIN' TOO LOUD. I'M TRYIN' TO TAKE A NAP UP HERE!
I THINK I'M GONNA GO WITH SOMETHING TRADITIONAL— CUTTING CLASS UP IN A TREE AND THEN JUMPING DOWN TO SAVE THE HEROINE.

OH.
ZURU (SLIP)

SWOON!
SA (FWIP)

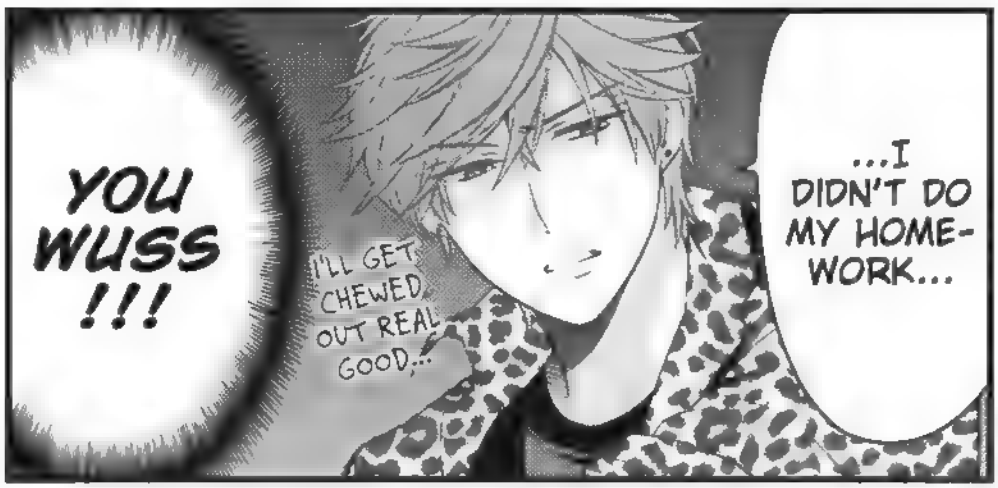
STEP BACK, NOZAKI.
PON (PAT)
ぽん
THIS JUST ISN'T A JOB FOR SOMEONE WHO'S NOT LIGHT ON HIS FEET.
ZURU (SLIP)
HAAH!
HFF!
HAAH!
HFF!
BA (FWIP)
I made it up !!!
HUH ...?
OH... YEAH...
CONGRATS.

...AND THE HEROINE COMES ALONG AFTER THE UPPER-CLASSMEN CALL HER OUT.
SO NOW I JUST...
...NAP ALL COOL, LIKE THIS...
SO MANY OF YOU GANGING UP ON ONE PERSON LIKE THAT'S REAL LAME.
HEY.
ENOUGH OF THAT.
...I'M GONNA STEAL A KISS, YOU KNOW.
...YOU SURE? IF YOU SAY THAT...
TCH!
SO THEY'RE GONE, HUH?
...HUH? THANK ME?
BOTH!
DAM-MIT!
WELL...I'M WONDERING IF YOU'RE SAYING THAT 'COS YOU'RE SCARED OR 'COS YOU'RE EMBARRASSED...
...
HEY!
SAY SOME-THING!!!

WE'RE GONNA SPLIT UP FROM HERE ON...
OKAY !!!
...NO-ZAKI !!!
ACK!
YOU TWO HAVE BEEN TOGETHER ALL THIS TIME.
YOU'RE RIGHT ...!!!
ISN'T THIS TYPE COOL 'COS HE'S A LONE WOLF?
YOU KNOW, I WAS THINK-ING...

YOU'RE JUST TIRED, AREN'T YOU?
LEAVE IT TO ME!!!
GULU (ZZZ)
THEN I'M GONNA GO FIND OUT WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE THE KIND OF BAD BOY WHO SLEEPS IN CLASS ...!!
GOT IT...

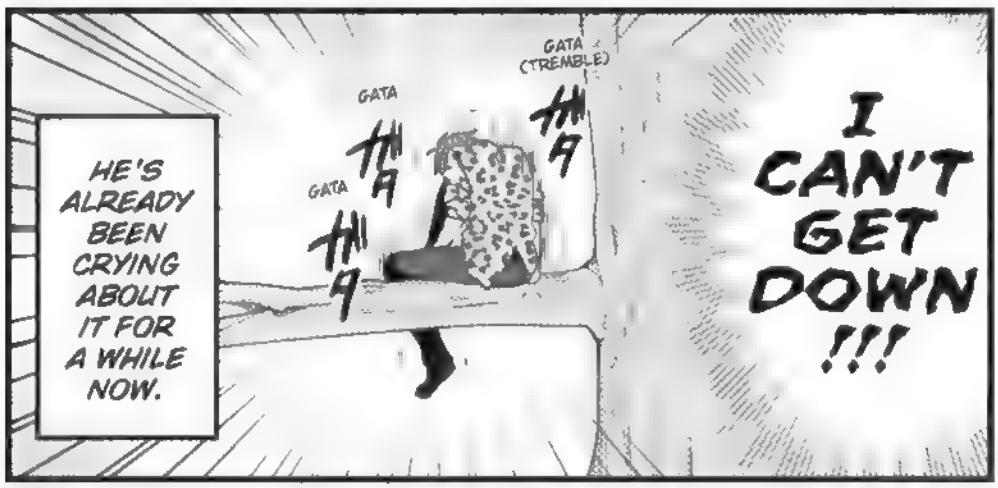
I'M NOT A WUSS LIKE YOU TWO.
...ANY-WAY...
ARE YOU SURE THAT'S OKAY, MIKORIN!?
HUH !?
I THINK I'LL STAY HERE AND CUT...


YOU WUSS !!!
I'LL GET CHEWED OUT REAL GOOD...
...I DIDN'T DO MY HOME-WORK...

DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE ME.
JUST HURRY UP AND SCRAM!
DON'T COME CRYING LATER ABOUT HOW YOU SHOULD'VE GIVEN UP AFTER ALL!
ARE YOU REALLY SURE...
...MIKO-SHIBA?

WHEW.
.....
THEY'RE FINALLY GONE...
PATA (PATTER)
ぱた
PATA
ぱた
PATA
ぱた

YOU TWO STILL HAVE A LONG WAY TO GO... I'D NEVER SKIP JUST 'COS I FORGOT MY HOMEWORK!!
LOOKS LIKE I MANAGED TO GET THEM OUT OF HERE WITHOUT THEM NOTICING ...


HE'S ALREADY BEEN CRYING ABOUT IT FOR A WHILE NOW.
GATA
GATA
GATA (TREMBLE)
I CAN'T GET DOWN!!!

HMM?
A BAG?
POOON (TOSS)
DOSA (THUD)
I'M SOOOO LATE~!
ACK!
I'LL JUST CLIMB THE WALL~!!
...IT'S THAT!?
DON'T TELL ME...
BYUN (FWOOSH)
DOSU (THWACK)
!!?
BYUN
BYUN
BYUN

CRAP.
..... AWW.

.....
I THREW 'EM TOO HARD.
THEY GOT STUCK...

DON'T ...!!! PLEASE DON'T ...!!!
DOSU
DOSU
YUSA (SHAKE)
YUSA
IS SHE GONNA KICK IT!?
OR SHAKE IT...!?
OH NO... SHE LOOKS PRETTY TOUGH ...!!!

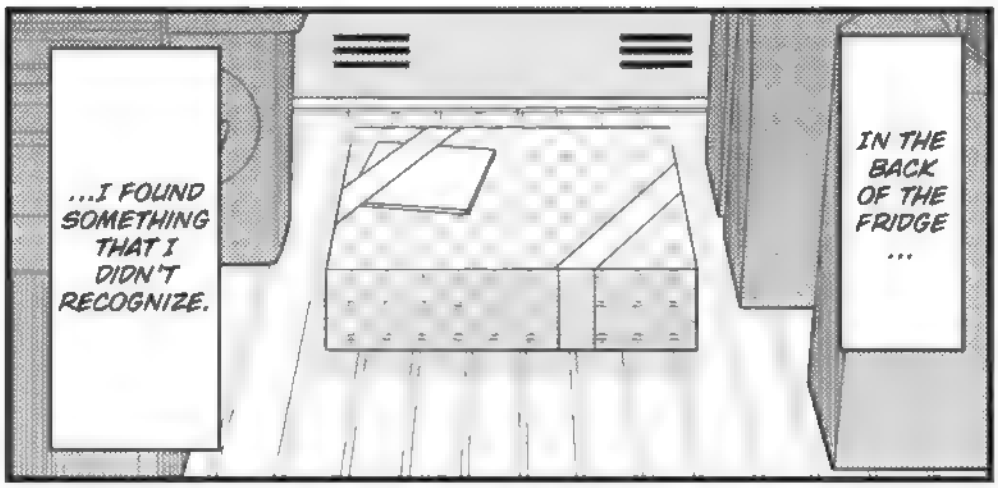
YOU GAVE UP TOO EASY!!!
GUUU (ZZZ)

THERE! TAKE THAT BAG!!! HURRY UP AND GET TO CLASS!!!
POI (TOSS)
POI
POI
D-DON'T SLEEP IN A PLACE LIKE THIS !!!
NOW I CAN'T GET DOWN !!!
DON'T SEND IT BACK!!!
BASHI (SMACK)
TAKE THAT, AND THAT, AND THAT!!!
YOU DON'T WANNA BE UNDER THIS TREE ANYMORE, DO YOU!!?
THERE, TAKE THAT !!!
YUSSA
YUSSA
YUSSA (SHAKE)
THEN I'LL DROP SOME BUGS ON HER OR SOMETHING!!!
O-OKAY ...!!!
!!!
HYLIN
HYLIN
HYLIN (WHOOSH)

GASA (RUSTLE)
GASA
...HMM ...?
WHAT ...?
GUSHA (SQUASH)
POTO (PLOP)
ぽと
POTO
ぽと
I'M LATE 'COS A CUTE GUY FELL FROM THE SKY.
DO YOU THINK I'M AN IDIOT, SEO?

SINCE I HAVE IT, I MIGHT AS WELL GIVE IT A GO.
SWOON!
YOU KNOW ...
...I MADE THIS, BUT IT DIDN'T GET ANY USE.
THIS CHARACTER WAS SUPPOSED TO SINK LIKE LEAD, WEREN'T THEY?
HEY. NO-ZAKI-KUN.
SA-KURA.
I HAVE A RE-QUEST ...
月刊 少女 ロマンス
BA (WHIP)
SWOON!
BUT IN THIS ISSUE, THEY'RE SWIMMING LIKE A FISH.

[ISSUE 28]


IN THE BACK OF THE FRIDGE ...
...I FOUND SOMETHING THAT I DIDN'T RECOGNIZE.

SOME-THING FELL OUT OF...
HUH?
WELL, I OPENED IT UP, AND IT TURNED OUT TO BE CANDY.
LET'S HAVE IT!
HIRA (FLUTTER)
OHH?
WHAT'S THAT?

Happy ♥ Valentine's Day
Dear Nozaki-kun,
I like you!
Chiyo Sakura
...IT...

YUM!

I COULDN'T GIVE THEM TO HIM ON VALENTINE'S DAY, SO THEY'VE BEEN IN THE FRIDGE EVER SINCE...
I TOTALLY FORGOT...
THAT'S RIGHT...

WELL, NO...I TOTALLY MEANT TO GIVE THEM TO HIM, BUT...
YOU COWARD!!
WHAAAT!? YOU BOUGHT THEM BUT DIDN'T GIVE THEM TO HIM?

A TEACHER —!!!
THE LADY FROM THE SCHOOL STORE —!!!
DA (DASH)
THERE'S A FIRST-YEAR GETTING CONFESSED TO OUT BACK!!!
HEY! SOMEONE'S GIVING HASHIGUCHI CHOCOLATES!
GATA (CLATTER)

UGH !! ....
...I HONESTLY JUST COULDN'T CATCH HIM ...!!!

PAPER: VALENTINE'S FAIR!! / SIGN: VALENTINE—

I CAN REFERENCE THEM FOR ACCESSORIES...
THE DECORATIONS ON THIS LIMITED EDITION PACKAGING ARE REALLY FANCY TOO...
I SHOULD USE IT AS A REFERENCE FOR MY NEXT COLOR COVER.
...THIS DISPLAY IS REALLY NICE...

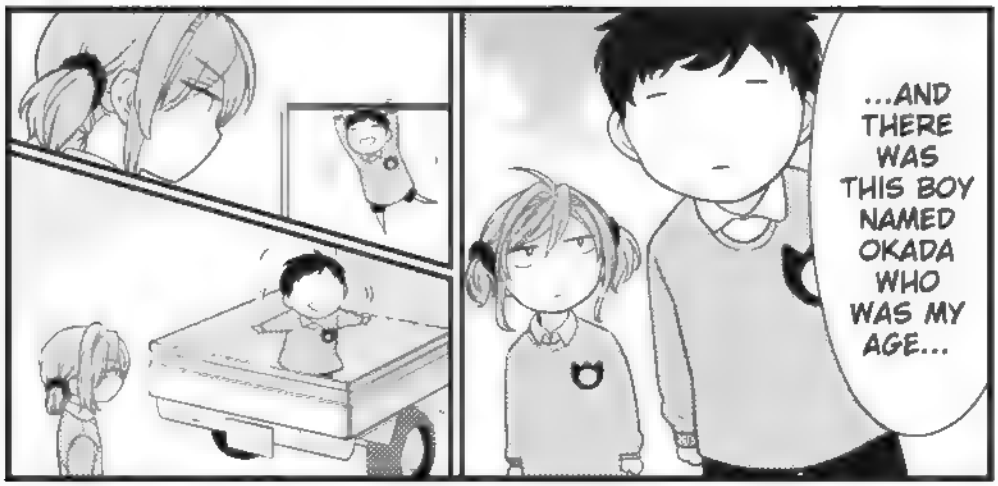
THEN YOU'D HAVE TO DO WHITE DAY THREE TIMES TOO, YOU KNOW!
SERIOUSLY?
AH HA HA!
VALENTINE'S DAY IS SO GREAT. I WISH IT HAPPENED THREE TIMES A YEAR...

PAPER: CHOCOLATIER— ／ TO JAPAN!!!

THOSE TWO ARE PRETTY CLOSE.
MAYBE THEY'RE PLAYING BASKET-BALL?
YEAH.
EX-CAPTAIN NOZAKI ASKED FOR HIM.
HUH?
WHERE'S WAKA-MATSU?
PASS!!!
NO-ZAKI-SEN-PAI!
OKAY!!!
...GO GET THE LIMITED EDITIONS FROM THE SHOP NEXT DOOR!!
NOW ...
PASHI (GRAB)
NICE WORK, WAKA-MATSU!!!
H—
HE'S NOT SERIOUS ABOUT HIM, IS HE ...!!?
EXPEN-SIVE CHOCO-LATES ...!!?
HE SAID THEY'RE GOOD ONES.
NOZAKI-SENPAI GAVE ME SOME CHOCO-LATES.
THANKS

HAVE YOU EVER GIVEN SOMEONE CHOCOLATES FOR VALENTINE'S DAY, YUZUKI?
YOU'VE NEVER MENTIONED DOING IT BEFORE...
HMM...
BUT, YOU KNOW ...
NOT LATELY ...

...I THINK I WAS ABOUT THREE BACK THEN...
YOU'RE GOING THAT FAR BACK ...!!?


...AND THERE WAS THIS BOY NAMED OKADA WHO WAS MY AGE...

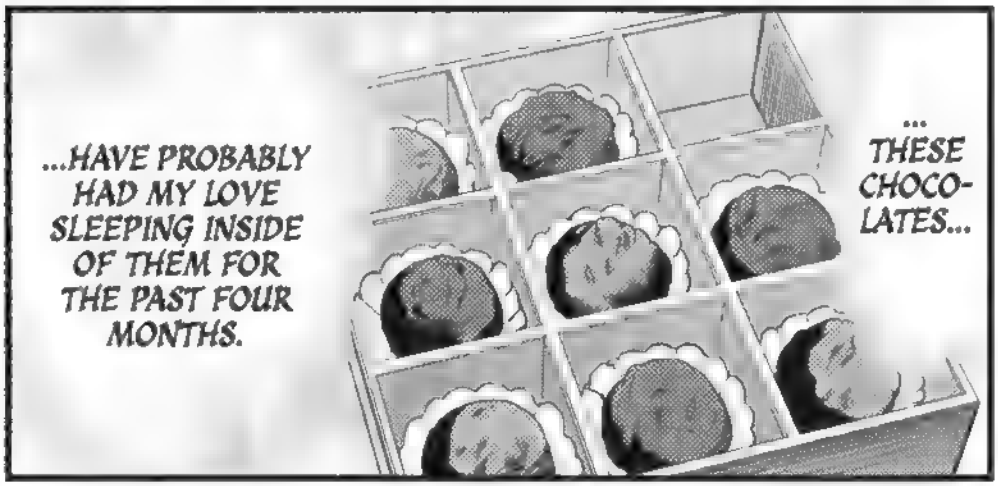
WHAT HAPPENED TO OKADA-KUN AFTER THAT!?
WAIT!!!
NOPE. THAT'S NOT IT.
OH.
...
BURORORODO (VROOM)

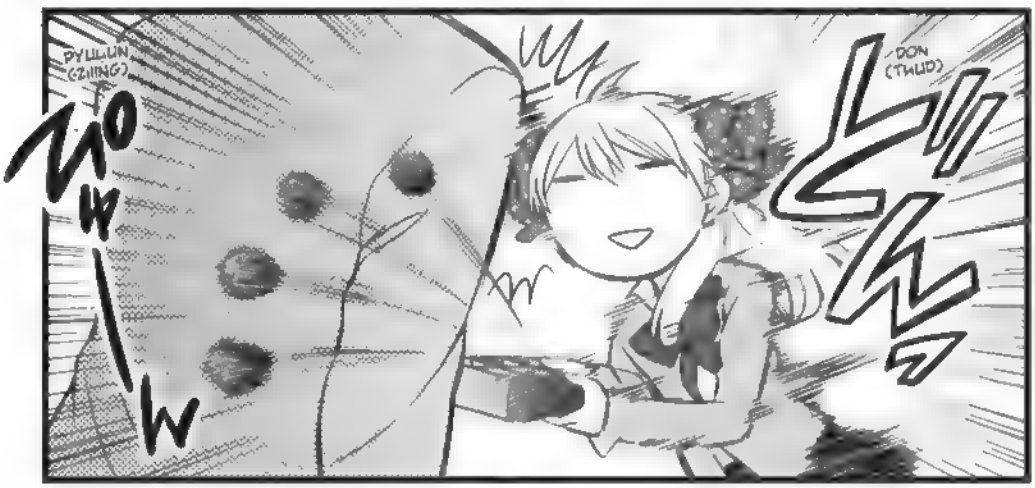
SO, KASHI-MA-KUN, YOU...
WAIT, GETTING THEM'S YOUR SPECIALTY, I'LL BET!
NAH.
I GAVE HORI-SENPAI CHOCOLATES.
HUH!!?
DON'T TELL ME... THEY WERE HAND-MADE ...!?
YEAH.
SEE, SENPAI SAID, "I DON'T WANNA EAT ANY HANDMADE CHOCO-LATES" ...
SO I WENT TO THE STORE ...
...USED THE CHOCOLATES THERE AS AN EXAMPLE...
...MADE A PERFECT COPY OF THEM...
...AND GAVE THEM TO HIM.
HERE YOU GO!
THANKS.
OH.
MAZE (MIX)
MAZE
SO BASICALLY THAT MEANS SENPAI ATE THE VERY HANDMADE CHOCOLATES HE HATES SO MUCH...
HEH...
KASHIMA-KUN, DO YOU LIKE SENPAI? OR DO YOU HATE HIM?

AWW, COME ON! I'M TELLING YOU THE TRUTH!
YEAH...BUT WHEN YOU SAY IT THAT EASILY ...
I LOVE THE PRESIDENT!!
WHAAAT? I LIKE HIM! I TOTALLY RESPECT HIM!
THAT'S MORE SERIOUS THAN I THOUGHT !!!
OHHH!
I'M GONNA GO HERE!!
I MEAN, I CAME TO THIS SCHOOL 'COS I SAW SENPAI IN A PLAY.
AND THEN WHAT DID YOU SAY BACK ...!?
OHHH ...!!!
IT WAS FATE!!!
YOU COULD BE THE HERO OF THE DRAMA CLUB!!
THEN AT THE ENTRANCE CEREMONY... SENPAI CAME UP TO ME AND SAID...
TOO CASUAL !!!
WHOOO!
HUH?
REALLY?

NOW IT WOULD BE PRETTY EASY TO GET HIM TO EAT THESE...
THAT'S RIGHT...
WELL, SINCE YOU FINALLY FOUND THOSE CHOCOLATES AGAIN, WHY DON'T YOU GET HIM TO EAT THEM NOW?

KAPO (POP)
EVEN THOUGH VALENTINE'S DAY IS LONG OVER...


...HAVE PROBABLY HAD MY LOVE SLEEPING INSIDE OF THEM FOR THE PAST FOUR MONTHS.
... THESE CHOCO-LATES...


PYULLUN (ZIING)
DON (THUD)

S-SORRY, SAKURA.
UH... ARE YOU ALL RIGHT ...?

NOZAKI-KUN, OF ALL PEOPLE ...!
I REALLY AM SORRY ...
UH... UMM... WHAT SHOULD I DO...?
LOVE
LOVE

OH, NO. I'M REALLY NOT MAD. IT'S OKAY.
AFTER ALL, THEY WERE FOR NOZAKI-KUN IN THE FIRST PLACE...

THE TRUTH IS, I WANT YOU TO EAT THEM.
SHE'S REALLY PISSED ...!!?
PICK THEM UP AND EAT THEM!!!

!!!
PAKU (CHOMP)
ぱくっ
BUT IF IT'LL MAKE HER FEEL BETTER...

DID SHE COOL OFF A LITTLE ...?
MOGU (MUNCH)
もぐ
MOGU
もぐ
WILL THIS DO...?

Nozaki-kun ...!!!
N.....!

...LOOKS SO HAPPY...
SHE...

I'LL TREAT YOU TO SOME-THING AS AN APOLOGY.
NO!
YOU REALLY DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT IT!!!

BUT I JUST CAN'T LET THINGS STAND LIKE THIS...
NO. I REALLY AM JUST FINE!!
I CAN'T BELIEVE I MADE YOU THAT MAD...
I'M NOT MAD!!! LIKE I SAID!

I'D LOVE SOME CANDY!
OH!
CANDY !!
WELL, IF YOU INSIST!

KYAAA!
IN PLACE OF THE WHITE DAY GIFT! ♡ JUST KIDDING !!!
CANDY...? CANDY...!? IS THAT SOME SORT OF CODE ...!?
LIKE THE CARROT AND THE STICK...?

VALENTINES FOR MIKOSHIBA-KUN

EVERYONE GETS SUCH A KICK OUT OF THIS...

BORN 2/14

[ISSUE 29]

WAKA-MATSU'S BEEN HELPING WITH APPLYING SCREEN TONE LATELY.
NOZAKI-SENPAI, IS IT OKAY IF I CUT THIS TONE UP?
YEAH.
THANKS.
OHH.
YOU GOT IT ON THERE NICELY.
WAY TO GO, WAKA-MATSU.
OHH.
YOU CUT IT OUT NICELY.
YOU'RE GREAT AT THIS.
DON'T PLAY WITH THE SCRAPS!
We got an alien!!!

LOOK. LOOK! PRAISE ME!

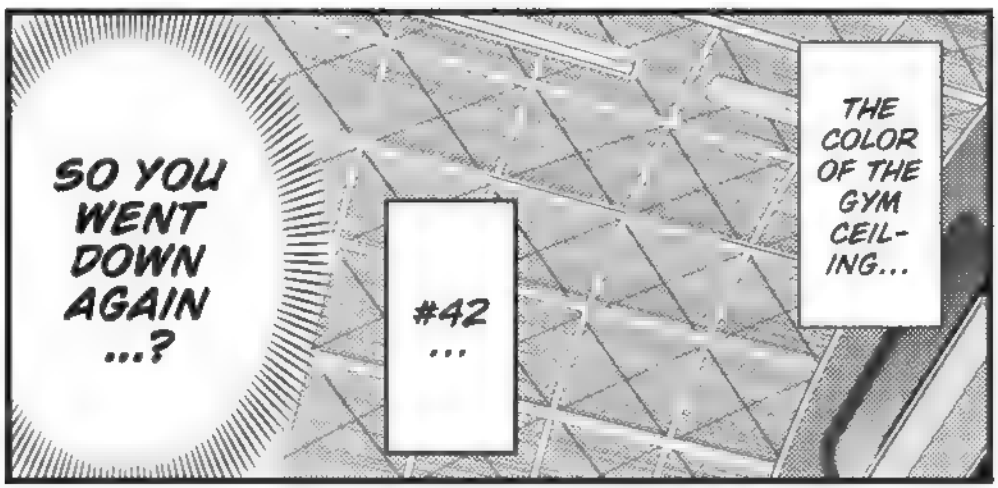
OF COURSE, I DID THAT WHEN I FIRST STARTED WORKING WITH TONE TOO.
IT JUST HAPPENS WITH TONE, DOESN'T IT!?
WHAT OTHER STUFF IS THERE?
WELL... FIRST OFF...
GUSA (SLICE)
!!
...YOU CUT YOUR HAND WITH THE BLADE.
!!!
BYON (BOING)
BYON
DOSU (STAB)
YOUR HAND SLIPS, AND THE BLADE GETS STUCK IN THE FLOOR.
ISN'T THERE ANYTHING THAT WON'T CAUSE ME BODILY HARM?
DOSU
!!!
AND EVERY NOW AND THEN, THE BLADE STABS YOUR THIGH INSTEAD.

WAKA-MATSU !!!
MAYBE I'LL GO LOOK FOR ONE ON MY WAY HOME...
IT'S PRETTY ROUGH UNTIL YOU FIND A BLADE THAT WORKS FOR YOU.
DOSU (THWACK)
THINKING ABOUT SOME-THING? WHAT?
I WAS KINDA THINKING ABOUT SOMETHING BACK THERE...
NAH ...
YOU NEED TO TELL HER OFF SOMETIMES !!
SEO-SENPAI'S JUST AS HORRIBLE AS USUAL.
SOME-ONE STOP WAKA-MATSU !!!
HE'S GONNA KILL HER!!!
THAT I WANT A UTILITY KNIFE.

SOUNDS LIKE IT INTERFERED WITH YOUR PRACTICE. SORRY ABOUT THAT.
FOR SOME REASON, THEY HELD ME DOWN, SO I COULDN'T GO GET MY KNIFE.
YOU DON'T HAVE TO WORRY ABOUT THE TONE THAT MUCH...

RIGHT !?
SUDDENLY, DURING PRACTICE TODAY...
OHH.
THAT HAP-PENS.
OH, NO! I'VE STARTED SEEING STUFF AROUND ME AS TONES LATELY. IT'S PRETTY FUN.

THE COLOR OF THE ONCOMING BALL
#34
THE COLOR OF THE BIBS
#53
THE SOLES OF THE SHOES
#62


SO YOU WENT DOWN AGAIN ...?
#42 ...
THE COLOR OF THE GYM CEIL-ING...

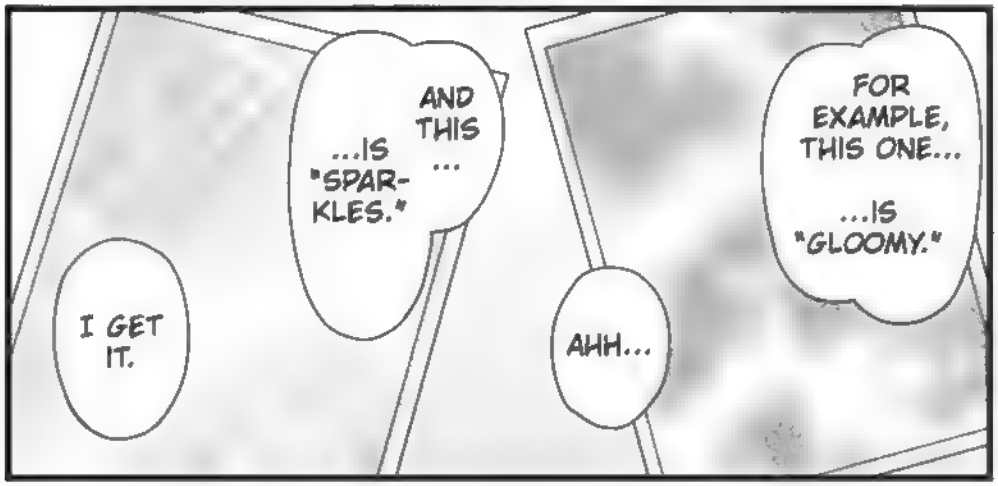
OKAY !!!
OKAY, YOU'RE TAKING CARE OF TONE AGAIN TODAY.
USE #1220 HERE.
1220

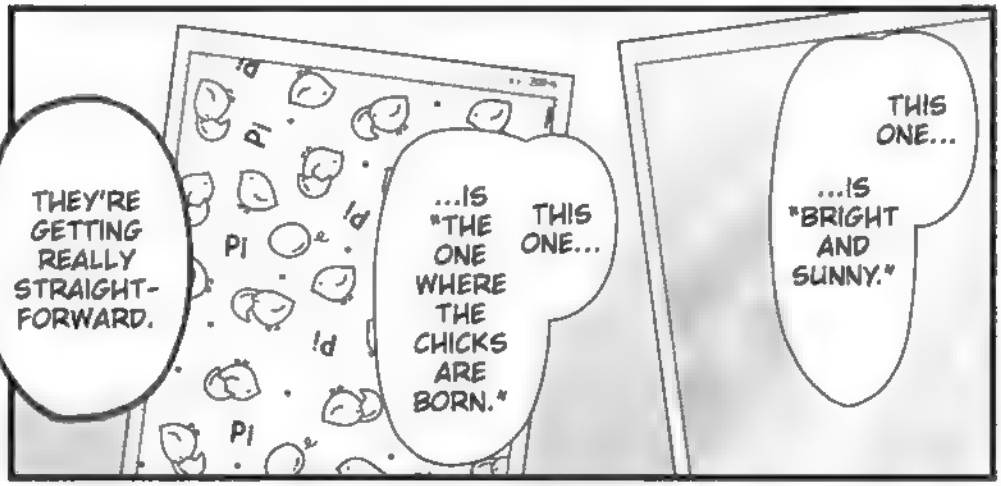
WAKA-MATSU ...
...THIS IS #1221.
SO CLOSE...
OH!
OOPS!!!

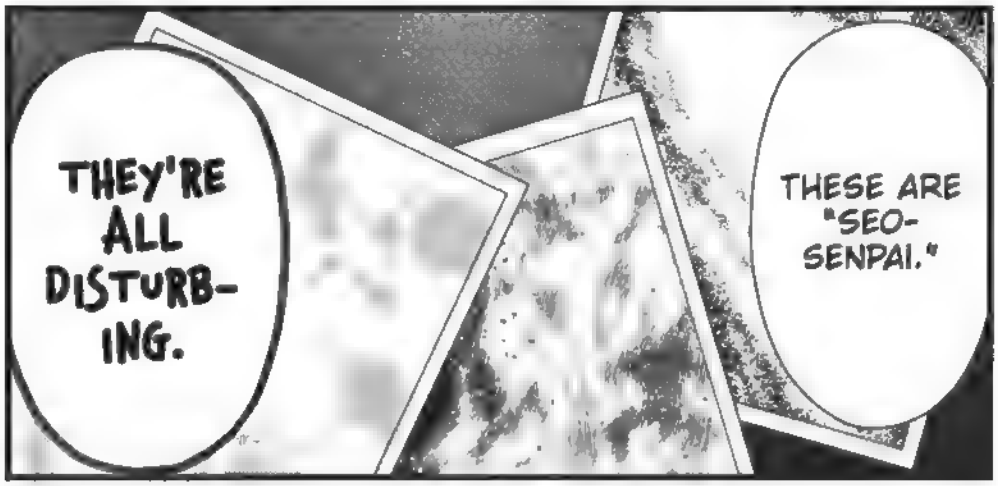
OKAY !!!
...IS #1121.
OKAY, THEN THIS ONE...
1121

WAKA-MATSU ...
...YOU NEED TO REALIZE THAT SOMETHING'S OFF BEFORE YOU PUT IT ON.
THIS IS SO OBVIOUSLY WRONG...

UNOFFICIAL NAMES



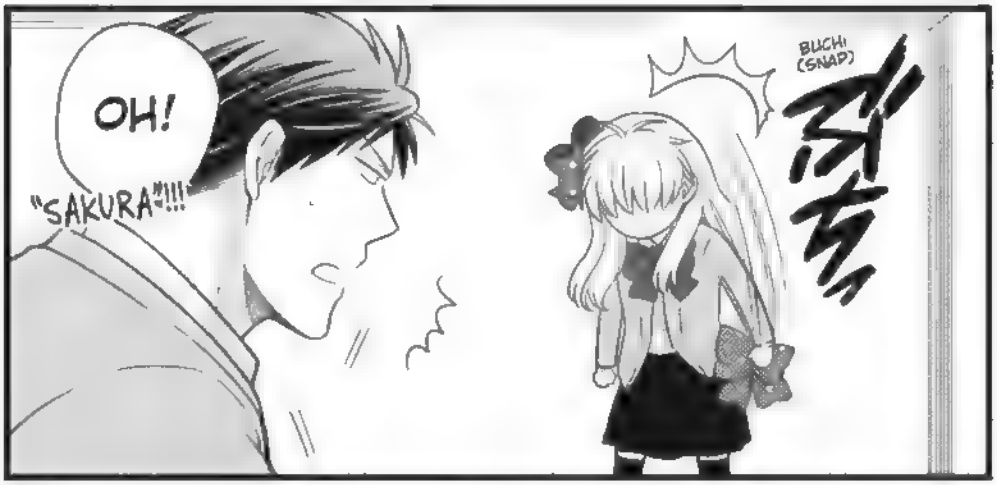




THEY TRIED ACTUALLY USING THEM.
WAKAMATSU.
USE "LOTS OF PRETTY, PRETTY, CUTE HEARTS" HERE.
"ROUND LACE THAT I'LL PROBABLY NEVER USE (LARGE)"...
... GOES HERE.
THIS IS "THE ONE THAT KINDA LOOKS LIKE THE FABRIC OF WORN-OUT JEANS."
AND HERE...
... "SEO."
"SEO" HERE TOO.
AND HERE ...
...THE BIG "SEO"...
SHE'S PRACTICALLY EVERYWHERE!!!
SEO-SENPAI!!!
WAAAH!

NAMES FOR THE TONES?
OHHH...
BY THE WAY...
...WE USED YOUR NAME TOO.
FOR THIS ONE.
HUH!?

THAT MEANS IT'S LIKE ME ...!?
WHAT'S IT LIKE?
WHAT IS IT THAT MAKES NOZAKI-KUN THINK OF ME ...?
DOKI
DOKI
DOKI (BADUM)


OH!
"SAKURA"!!!
BUCHI (SNAP)

SO WAKA WANTS A KNIFE?
?
WHY WON'T YOU LET HIM GET ONE?
WELL ...
LIKE, HE'S JUST NOT READY FOR THAT...
OR MAYBE IT'S NOT TIME FOR HIM TO HAVE ONE YET...
MAYBE ONCE HE'S OLDER...
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? WE'RE IN HIGH SCHOOL!
ARE YOU HIS MOM OR SOMETHING?
I DON'T REALLY GET WHAT'S GOING ON...
...BUT YOU WON'T COMPLAIN IF I JUST BUY ONE AND GIVE IT TO HIM, WILL YOU?
THEN WE'RE COMING WITH YOU!!!
PLEASE DON'T GIVE HIM ANYTHING WITHOUT OUR PERMIS-SION!!!
WHAT THE HELL ARE THESE GUYS DOING TO YOU, WAKA?
BA (JUMP)

OH!
FOUND IT.
THIS ONE LOOKS PRETTY EASY TO CUT WITH, DOESN'T IT?
AND IT'S BIG.

HUNH!!?
IT'S GOT AN ULTRA-LONG BLADE!!!
NO WAY!!! ARE YOU TRYING TO TURN WAKAMATSU INTO A CRIMINAL!!?

I GUESS I'LL GO FOR THE DESIGN...
THIS SKINNY ONE LOOKS PRETTY COOL.

OH!
THAT ONE'S NICE!!! IT'S GOT A SHORT BLADE!!!
RIGHT, SEO-SAN!!!?
GETTING STABBED WITH THAT ONE SHOULD BE OKAY!
WHAT DO YOU THINK HE'S GONNA USE IT FOR?
FREAKY!

HUH ...!?
A BLADE?
HERE.
WAKA.
THIS IS FOR YOU.

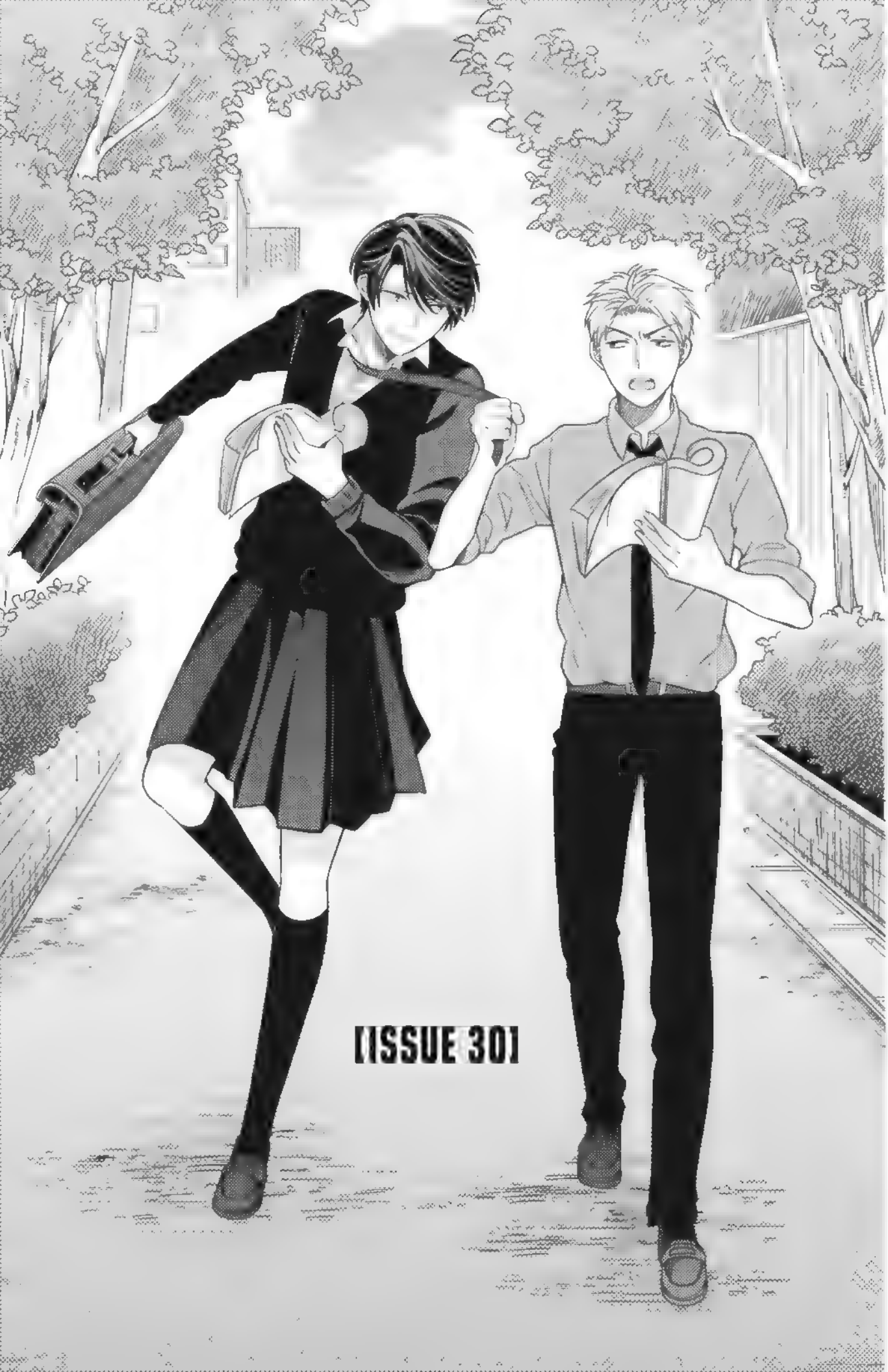
... RIGHT?
YOU'VE WANTED ONE FOR A WHILE...

JIIIN (MOVED)
...WHAT I WANTED...
I... I...
SEN-PAI...
SHE REMEM-BERED...

NO WAY!
HUH !?
DON'T!!!
I'm gonna call this pattern "Seo-sempai (rare)" from now on!!!

WHAT EXTRAORDINARY SHARPNESS!!

EYEBALLING IT


[ISSUE 30]

I HAVE TO PRACTICE STARTING TOMORROW.
ONE OF THE ACTORS BROKE A BONE, SO I'M GONNA BE TAKING HIS PLACE.
OHHH!!!
THAT'S RARE!
CAN WE COME WATCH?

OKAY!
THEN LET'S GET START-ED!
.....HUH, NO-ZAKI!!?
I WAS ASKED TO STAND IN FOR THE PRINCE.

FOR KASHIMA!? WHAT'S SHE DOING!?
STANDING IN FOR ME.
HUH!!?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOU—

わく
WAKU (EXCITED)
わく
WAKU
わく
WAKU
NOZAKI

WHEN I SEE YOUR FACE...

OKAY.
OKAY, NEXT LET'S START WHERE RUDOLPH, THE PRINCE'S FORMER FRIEND, GOES AFTER HIM!
HERE IT COMES !!!
STOP RIGHT THERE, PRINCE. YOU'RE GOING UP AGAINST ME.
SHOW ME RIGHT NOW...
...THIS LOVE YOU HAVE FOR YOUR LADY!
WHOOOA! THAT'S SUCH A BAD GUY FACE, SENPAI!
OH, NOT GOOD. HE'LL GET MAD AT ME IF I KEEP GRINNING!!! GOTTA HOLD IT IN!!! GLARE, GLARE!!
I DIDN'T WANT TO FIGHT YOU...
...RU-DOLPH ...
Nill (SMIRK)
HEY, PRINCE! YOU LOOK LIKE THE BAD GUY!

GACHA (RATTLE)
...HAVE AT YOU!!!
BA (WHAP)
NOW, THEN ...

YEAH. I BET PRACTICING EVERY DAY HAS MADE THE MOVES JUST SINK INTO THEIR BONES.
SHE'S THE PERFECT PRINCE ONCE THEY START ACTING!
WOW ...!!!
KAN (CLANG)
KAN
KAN
WHAT SWORDSMANSHIP!!!

...BUT I JUST CAN'T DEAL THE FINAL BLOW TO SENPAI ...!!!
HFF!
HFF!
I KNOW WHAT I HAVE TO DO...
..... WHY ...?

...BUT I JUST WANNA GRAB HER LEG AND SEND HER FLYING!!!
HFF!
HFF!
DAMMIT, WHY...? I KNOW WHAT I GOTTA DO...

HUH!?
MAYBE YOU SHOULD FIND SOMEONE ELSE TO FILL THE ROLE?
HORI-CHAN, YOU AND THE PRINCE JUST DON'T WORK TOGETHER!
BUT IT'S JUST NOT THAT EASY...
SOMEONE ELSE!?

ME?
?
WHAT ABOUT YOU, NOZAKI!?
FOR RUDOLPH!!!
!!!
NOZAKI !!!
YEAH !!!

HE KNOWS THE STORY BETTER THAN ANYONE ELSE. HE SHOULD BE MORE ATTACHED TO ALL OF THE CHARACTERS THAN ANYONE ELSE...!!!
AFTER ALL, HE IS THE ONE WHO WROTE THE PLAY...
RUDOLPH, HUH...?

?
WAS THERE REALLY A SIDE CHARAC-TER LIKE THIS?

IT'S SO MONO-TONE!!!
BUN
BUN (WAVE)
FEEL THE BITE OF MY SWORD!
HEY, YOU!
THEY TRIED IT ANY-WAY.

HE'S SO AWFUL !!!
SUTTEEEN (FLOP)
I'VE BEEN DEFEAT-ED!

DON'T MAKE UP NEW BACK-STORY !!!
WHAT SHALL I SAY TO HER...?
I, RUDOLPH, HAVE A SISTER THAT I LEFT BEHIND IN MY HOMELAND.
UGH ...!

DON'T CREATE SPIN-OFFS!!!
NEXT TIME!
LUCY, THE SISTER, WILL COME TO CHALLENGE THE PRINCE TO AVENGE HER BROTHER!!!

DON'T YOU GUYS... KNOW ANYONE?
SOMEONE WHO LIKES STANDING OUT AND HAS SOME GUTS...?

HMM...
I CAN'T THINK OF ANY-ONE...
EVEN IF I DID, IT'D BE HARD TO ASK HIM...
WE'D HAVE TO THINK ABOUT HIS SCHEDULE, AFTER ALL...
OH...
YEAH...

TIMES LIKE THESE CALL FOR...
... SOME-ONE WHO'S EASY TO FOOL ...
...AND KINDA THICK ...
...WHO'D JUMP RIGHT IN IF YOU SWEET-TALKED HIM...

!?
!!?
SO YOU HAVE ONE OF THOSE.

WHAT!?
ME, ACT!?
OF COURSE I CAN'T DO THAT!!!
SCREW YOU!!!

MIKORIN, YOU LOOK GREAT!!
CAN I TAKE A PICTURE?
HEH...
NO WONDER I CONSIDER YOU MY RIVAL!!!
HEY, NOW
STOP IT...

...LIKE I'M GONNA LET YOU ROPE ME INTO THIS!!!
GASHAAAN (CRASH)
ARE YOU ALL DUMB OR SOME-THING!!?
WHO'D FALL FOR SOMETHING THAT OBVIOUS !!!?
オーディション!!

MIKORIN, YOU LOOK MUCH COOLER HOLDING IT LIKE THAT!!
LIKE THIS?
WHOA!
CHÄ (CLINK)
THAT POSE WOULD EVEN UPSTAGE THE PRINCE, MIKOSHIBA!!
WHOO-HOO!

HORI-CHAN, WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT?
?
WELL...
I JUST FEEL LIKE I'VE SEEN HIM SOME-WHERE...

MAYBE IT'S 'COS HE'S KASHIMA-KUN'S FRIEND?
I SEE HIM AROUND A LOT TOO.
I KNOW THAT...
...BUT IT'S MORE... LIKE HE REALLY LOOKS LIKE SOMEONE I KNOW WELL...

HE'S ODDLY HARD-WORK-ING...
...AND GETS EMBAR-RASSED REALLY EASILY.
KAAA (BLUSH)
HE... ...GETS DOWN...
...AND WORRIES A LOT...

AGH!
IT'S MAMIKO !!!

JUST COULDN'T HELP BUT SAY IT

LOOKS LIKE YOU'VE GOT IT ALL DOWN.
LET'S DO A QUICK RUN-THROUGH.
O—KAY ...!
WHOAAA... I KNOW THE PRINCE IS GOING TO WIN, BUT I JUST CAN'T HELP BUT ROOT FOR HIM!!
KAN (CLANG)
KAN
KAN
GOOD LUCK, PRINCE!
O— OH... YEAH.
THAT'S RIGHT... HE'S MIKOSHIBA, NOT MAMIKO.
WHOA! MAMIKO'S IN TROUBLE ...!!
NOT LIKE THAT! PUT YOUR BACK INTO IT... OKAY, NOW STEP INTO IT...
THERE!!!
KILL THE DAMN PRINCE!!!
WHOA!
RARARUH!!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, PRESI-DENT!!!?

ISN'T IT GREAT WE FOUND SOMEONE GOOD TO HELP OUT!?
THIS ONE TOO!!
WILL YOU PUT THIS ON?
AHH, I WASN'T SURE IT WAS GONNA WORK OUT FOR A WHILE, BUT...

IT'S NOTH-ING...
SO...
...WHAT ARE YOU SULKING ABOUT...
...KA-SHIMA?

NO!!!
THAT JUST CAN'T BE!!!
COULD IT BE HE REALLY LIKES HIM...?
SENPAI WAS CHEER-ING FOR MIKO-SHIBA, NOT ME...

SEE, HE KEEPS MESSING UP HIS NAME.
MAMI... KOSHI-BA!!!
THAT ONE LINE WAS REALLY GREAT.
GOOD JOB!
MAMI... KO-SHIBA!!

BACK TO SQUARE ONE

IS MIKO-SHIBA COMING TO RE-HEARSAL AGAIN TODAY?
YEAH. I GOT HIM TO AGREE TO IT YESTER-DAY.
CAN I COUNT ON YOU AGAIN TOMOR-ROW?
OKAY!
HE'S REALLY EASY TO TALK TO ONCE HE GETS USED TO YOU.
GARA (SLIDE)
EX-CUSE ME!
IS MIKO-SHIBA—
HE WENT BACK TO NORMAL AFTER A DAY PASSED, SO YOU'LL HAVE TO GET HIM USED TO YOU ALL OVER AGAIN.
ONE MORE TIME.
KASHIMA! I'M GONNA DO IT AFTER ALL!
TIME FOR PRACTICE!

MONTHLY GIRLS' NOZAKI-KUN 3

Izumi Tsubaki

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This book is a work of fiction. Names, characters, places, and incidents are the product of the author's imagination or are used fictitiously. Any resemblance to actual events, locales, or persons, living or dead, is coincidental.

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UM...
WOULD IT BE OKAY IF I PUT ON A COSTUME TOO?
SURE.
!!!
NOZAKI-KUN IN A COS-TUME!!!
ドキッ
DOKI (BADUM)

THIS WAS THE ONLY ONE THAT FIT ME!!!
ONE SIZE FITS ALL!!!

OF ALL THE POSSIBLE OUTFITS, WHY DID IT HAVE TO BE THAT ONE...?
BOO HOO HOO...!
Y-YEAH.
YOU WERE LOOKING FORWARD TO IT, SO THAT MUST SUCK...

I CAN'T SEE HIS FACE IN THAT!!!
YOU WANT TO SEE THAT !!?
IT'D BE LIKE THIS, YOU KNOW!!?

KENDO
YOU DID IT IN YOUR GYM ELECTIVE, DIDN'T YOU?
LIKE THAT...
OHH!
SENPAI, HOW DO I HOLD THIS?
NOW!
PRE-PARE YOUR-SELF ...
...RU-DOLPH !!!
BA (WHAP)
JIRI
JIRI
JIRI
JIRI (INCH)
JIRI
THAT'S REALLY BEAR-LIKE.
NOZAKI-KUN CHOSE JUDO FOR HIS ELECTIVE, YOU KNOW.

MITSUYA MAENO'S

HYPE LESSON!

HEY! HI. IT'S MITSUYA MAENO, THE SKILLED EDITOR. FINALLY, MY FULL NAME IS MADE PUBLIC FOR THE FIRST TIME!! SO TODAY, I'M GOING TO EXPLAIN "HYPE," ONE OF THE DUTIES OF AN EDITOR. TO START US OFF, HYPES ARE THE CATCHPHRASE-LIKE LINES THAT ARE WRITTEN ON A STORY'S TITLE PAGE OR LAST PAGE WHEN IT RUNS IN THE MAGAZINE. GENERALLY WE EDITORS COME UP WITH THESE, BUT WE DON'T SAY "I THOUGHT OF THAT!" SO SOME OF THE MANGA-KA DON'T REALIZE IT! I REALLY AM ONE OF THOSE GIANTS BEHIND THE SCENES, YOU KNOW! SO ANYWAY, THIS TIME I'M SHOWING YOU THE HYPES FROM *MONTHLY GIRLS' NOZAKI-KUN*!

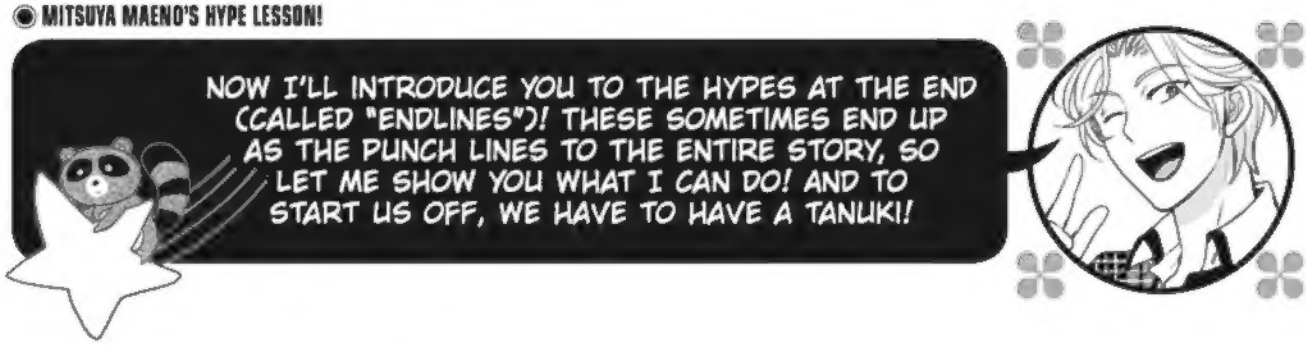
THIS RAN IN THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE YEAR, SO IT'S ABOUT NEW YEAR'S! I USE A LOT OF SEASONAL MATERIAL MYSELF. ACTUALLY, YUMENO-SENSEI'S BEAN-THROWING STORY WAS MY IDEA TOO!

THAT'S TOTALLY MY LINE! I WONDER IF THIS MANGA'S EDITOR IS A FAN OF MINE! I'LL HAVE TO INVITE THEM OUT DRINKING SOMETIME!

WONDERFUL! IT FEELS LIKE THEY'RE SHARING THE SAME CUSHION! I DO THAT A LOT TOO.

THIS WOULD BE A DRAMATIC ONE, I THINK. I'M REALLY GOOD AT THOSE TOO! THERE ARE GIRLS BURSTING OUT INTO TEARS LEFT AND RIGHT JUST AFTER SEEING THE TITLE PAGE!

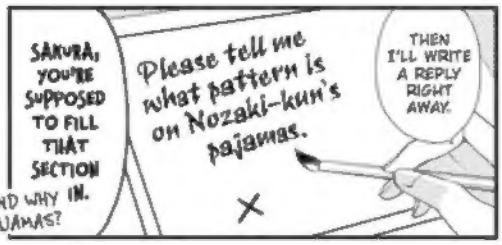
HE'S GOT SUCH A CUTE SENSE OF LANGUAGE, DOESN'T HE? IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SO MUCH BETTER IF THIS WAKAMATSU-KUN (RIGHT?) HAD BEEN A GIRL.


NOW I'LL INTRODUCE YOU TO THE HYPES AT THE END (CALLED "ENDLINES")! THESE SOMETIMES END UP AS THE PUNCH LINES TO THE ENTIRE STORY, SO LET ME SHOW YOU WHAT I CAN DO! AND TO START US OFF, WE HAVE TO HAVE A TANUKI!

[ISSUE 6]

THE APPEARANCE OF HORI-SENPAI, THE BACKGROUND ARTIST

◆ HER WORRIES GOT ALL COVERED UP FOR NOW.


SAKURA, YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO FILL THAT SECTION IN.
AND WHY PAJAMAS?
Please tell me what pattern is on Nozaki-kun's pajamas.
THEN I'LL WRITE A REPLY RIGHT AWAY.

[ISSUE 2]

RIDING THE BIKE TOGETHER

◆ THERE'S A STRANGE DISTANCE BETWEEN THEM, BUT IT GOT SMALLER ON THE WAY HOME FROM SCHOOL.

[ISSUE 19]

MIKOSHIBA MODELING FOR THE ART CLUB

Next time you ask, I'll model for you in private... in the nude.
...Fine.
Are you trying to say you didn't get enough of looking me up and down all day today?

◆ THE MOUTH IS THE ROOT OF ALL SHAME...

[ISSUE 4]

THE APPEARANCE OF YUZUKI

◆ THE BEASTLY, DEVILISH ANGEL WITH THE BEAUTIFUL VOICE...

[ISSUE 27]

MIKOSHIBA AND YUZUKI'S FIRST MEETING

◆ FATED ENCOUNTER.

[ISSUE 25]

LORELAI'S TRUE IDENTITY IS...!?

◆ WAKAMATSU'S STRONG POINT → HIS INNOCENCE. HIS WEAK POINT → HE'S TOO INNOCENT.

COME ON!!! IT'S JUST NOT FAIR FOR HIM TO HAVE ALL THOSE STRENGTHS!!!
STOP IT!!! DO YOU HAVE A GRUDGE AGAINST SUZUKI OR SOMETHING!!?
APOLOGIZE TO SEO-SENPAI!!!
WAAAAAAAH!

WELL? HAVE YOU GOTTEN A GOOD IDEA OF WHAT I DO? WE HERE AT *GIRLS' ROMANCE* ARE WAITING FOR YOUR SUBMISSIONS! IF YOU BRING IT IN YOURSELF, YOU MIGHT GET LUCKY AND MEET ME. ANYWAY, SEE YOU NEXT TIME!